The Evangelistic Awakening

from W. J. Thompson
with best wishes.

THE EVANGELISTIC AWAKENING

By

WENTWORTH F. STEWART

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INTRODUCTION.

REV. GEO. ELLIOTT, D. D., LL. D.

For a score of years solitary voices in the wilderness have been proclaiming that the Christian Church is on the eve of such a revival of spiritual religion as her past history has not known or dreamed. Already, in this first decade of the twentieth century, these auguries of the prophesying heart are beginning to make themselves good. There are abundant signs that the period of intellectual criticism is about to give place to an age of moral faith.

There are two notes which must characterize any real religious awakening, the spiritual and the ethical note. There must be a restored communion with God and a revival of righteousness. The twin slogans of Methodism, "the Witness of the Spirit" and "Holiness unto the Lord," are the abiding foundations of all true evangelism.

These two notes, so aggressively affirmed by Wesley and his coadjutors, have been but too faintly sounded in the evangelical movements of the ninteenth century. It is to be

marked that no general social and moral transformation of communities has followed the hippodrome revivalism of the past generation, with its abundant advertising and elaborate mechanical devices. Its conversions have been too often theological rather than spiritual, and secured by passive acquiescence in a verbal formula rather than by active trust in a living Lord. It has been lacking in spiritual vision and in ethical fervor.

The age of historic criticism through which the Church is now passing has doubtless caused the shipwreck of many souls. Yet there can be no doubt that it is out of the dissolution of institutional and confessional religion that a vital and moral faith is always born. So it will be in the present crisis. Holy Scripture has become to truly religious souls the very voice of the God who shaped the providential history back of the sacred records, and all the more so that we have ceased to impose upon the oracles of God our man-made theories of what would constitute a worthy revelation of Himself. If the bonds of the letter have been relaxed, it is only that the voice of the Spirit may speak the more distinctly. Truth, dead in the tomb of dogma, is springing to life at the question of

criticism. To those who really believe in God it is as certain that a great spiritual revival will follow the decay of Protestant scholasticism as that the Protestant Reformation itself sprang out of the decadence of medieval theology.

The twentieth century revival must preach a whole gospel for the whole of human nature. It must proclaim the kingdom of God as a great divine earthly possibility. It will seek to save the outer life as well as the souls of men. It will preach a full salvation, large enough to redeem society from selfishness, business from baseness, and politics from pollution.

There is no new evangelism. Now, as of old, the only deliverance possible from sin and selfishness is through the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Real reformation is rooted in regeneration. But there must be a renewal of the evangelical spirit, as the Church feels anew the thrill of the old life. Neglected truths must be resurrected from the tomb of neglect, and well-known ones take on new life and be clothed in new forms of expression. The Church which experiences a perpetual Pentecost will be no slave to mechanism, but will continually manifest a fresh originality in methods.

The pages which follow are more than a

theoretical discussion of the subject of evangelism. They are also the laboratory notes of an expert. The author has been a successful pastor, and is now one of the most forceful leaders of men among the younger Presiding Elders of Methodism. In the organization of his district for aggressive evangelism he has shown himself not merely a master of methods, but, better still, a dynamic center of inspiration.

In commending his book, especially to the study of our younger preachers, let me also add my earnest exhortation that they return with renewed zeal to the precious twofold deposit of Methodism, the reality of the Divine Life in the soul and the possibility of evangelical perfection. So shall theirs be a jeweled ministry, which shall realize to the Church the refreshment of "the latter rain."

GEORGE ELLIOTT.

CENTRAL CHURCH, DETROIT, MICH.

PREFACE.

This little volume is written,—

First, to give a general view of the present evangelistic situation, to indicate some things that have led up to this condition and to set forth the signs of better days.

The prophetic tone of the first part is accounted for, in that the topics of these three chapters were originally discussed more than two years ago in the columns of the *Michigan Advocate*. They were rewritten last October, and before the book could be completed, because of the strenuous work of the winter, the prophetic notes of Part One had been in some measure fulfilled in the great Welsh revival and other manifestations of the same spirit. But these, we trust, are only the beginnings.

It aims, secondly, and more especially, to set forth some fundamental principles which need emphasis, and to outline what are to be, in the author's judgment, the conditions of successful evangelism in the Church of the future. It does not attempt to suggest methods for ex-

tensive use, nor does it set forth programs that have been or may be successfully executed. We do not discount these, but believe them only timely expediences, not capable of universal adoption, not adjustable to all ages, hence only a temporary relief. We contend concerning methods and programs of operation, that the only evangelism abidingly successful must be worked out by men who have hold of essential principles, and each man sufficiently ingenious to become all things to all men and the author of his own methods. In sincerity,

WENTWORTH F. STEWART.

47 Grummond Ave., Detroit, Mich.,
March 1, 1905.

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PRESENT STATE OF EVANGELISM

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Part I.

PRESENT STATE OF EVANGELISM.

CHAPTER I.

AN ANALYSIS.

1. A Review.
2. The Questioning Period.
3. The Influence of Modern Scholarship.
4. The Effect of the Scientific Spirit.
5. The Effect of the Commercial Spirit.
6. Perfunctory Service.
7. Indifferent World.
8. Evangelism in Disfavor.

CHAPTER I.

AN ANALYSIS.

The history of the Christian religion is one of periodical revivals. The uprising and onmoving tide noted by the several great periods —such as the days of the early Church in the Roman Empire, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Puritan Movement, and the great Wesleyan Revival—are all manifestations of the same force, appearing with varied characteristics and somewhat different effects. Between these great epochs the principles of the Christian religion appeared, on the surface, to be on the decline. Some peculiar attitude of thought, or condition of life into which the world drifted, either raised a barrier against these movements or paralyzed the vital forces which propelled them; and the Church seemed to find it necessary to wait for a readjustment of thought before she could move forward again upon her evangelizing mission.

It is the consensus of opinion that for the

last half century we have been passing through one of these periods of, at least apparent, decline, which, on the surface, seems like retrogression, if not degeneration; so that as we come face to face with the morning of the twentieth century, a rather natural point for pausing and considering how great are our responsibilities and how vast our opportunities, we discover that, with all the splendid heritage the past has bestowed upon us, when the Church ought to be at the height of its glory and power, it is weak and faltering, with a consciousness of its condition that is perfectly transparent.

The Questioning Period.

This has been styled both an age of doubt and an age of faith; and this by men equally strong and equally true. One writes the "Gospel for an Age of Doubt," another entitles his book "An Age of Faith." These are not representative men of opposite views, but each presents a different phase of the present attitude of the world. Both views are correct. Every age has its aspects of faith and every age its phases of doubt. It must be evident to all that the great fundamental principles and historic facts of Christianity never before had so universal acceptance. Real

atheism or unqualified infidelity are almost entirely attitudes of the past among thoughtful people. Christianity in its essentials, touching the historic person and principles of Jesus of Nazareth, is hardly questioned. The Sermon on the Mount never had so unqualified indorsement, and Christ was never so unanimously accorded the supreme place as to-day, when, almost without dissent, the world joins in singing, "No mortal can with Him compare." So that in the broadest sense, as to confidence in the Christian religion, this may be styled, without controversy, an age of faith.

Yet viewed from another standpoint this is noticeably an age of doubt. We speak not so much of the immediate hour as of the period which is now closing—if it has not already closed—since the beginning of the more general use of the scientific spirit and historic method in Christian theology. But we do not mean by doubt, in this relation, that attitude of thought which rejects or denies positively and aggressively the great truths of religion, but, rather, doubt in the sense of uncertainty as to just what are tenable positions; in other words, the inquiring or questioning spirit. This doubt referred to, is not so much in realms

entirely outside the Church and kingdom, but among those within or on the border; who, while accepting sufficiently Christian principles to identify themselves in a measure with the interests of Christianity, are, nevertheless, in an unsettled and uncertain attitude as to how much is necessary to believe, and how much can be safely relied upon. These are in no sense opponents to Christianity, but seekers after truth.

The Influence of Modern Scholarship.

It is no reflection upon modern scholarship to declare that to it is attributable in no little measure this present attitude. It is not within the limits of this discussion to consider the merits or demerits, the intent or effect upon the faith of the Christian world, of the investigations or conclusions of modern scholarship. Suffice it to say that the result of the historic method in Christian theology was inevitable; for, while men might continue to accept many things not yet proven true, they would not continue to accept those things that beyond a doubt were proven to be without foundation. For side by side with the historic method came the scientific spirit, which demanded that, although religion might be supernatural, it could not be

irrational; hence, the result: when through the modern method of research many things that had been considered heretofore as supremely sacred were taken hold of in the spirit of a cold, critical analysis, seeking truth for truth's sake, regardless of whether any institutions or traditions should be permanently preserved, it was quite impossible that the faith of multitudes of people should fail to be impaired, when severed from the anchorage which held them quite as much to sacred traditions and institutions as to fundamental facts; for not all religious teachers would be sufficiently careful in dealing with these conditions to protect those thus innocently tied to uncertain moorings, until their faith had been transferred from tradition to truth; while side by side with this influence was that more subtle still, which laid hold upon the popular mind through the standard literature of fiction, which, while unexcelled as literature, was, to say the least, misty and uncertain, if not almost agnostic in its tendencies, upon which the people fed their intellects, often to the entire paralysis of their Christian faith.

To add to the misfortune of this period, leaders of Christian thought, instead of seek-

ing a middle ground of agreement, arrayed themselves on either side. On the one side, the destructive critics, who inferred that modern scholarship had reduced the supernaturalism of Christianity to the minimum, and made our religion a matter of moral principle, to whom "the cross of Christ is foolishness," who found no place in their theology for atoning blood, redeeming grace, and the supernatural energy of the Holy Spirit. On the other extreme, those opposed to modern scholarship insisted upon literal interpretation; clinging to traditions, relying upon mechanical processes, unsconsciously discounting great fundamentals and the gifts of the Divine Spirit. These together paralyzed the life of the Church, and destroyed the spirit of genuine evangelism; for while the Gospel, robbed of the supernatural, has absolutely no power of evangelization, so, on the other hand, the Gospel which is confined to peculiar formulas and mechanical processes is utterly incapable of adaptation to the changing conditions of life and society.

Scientific Spirit.

While it is unquestionably true that Christian men of science have increased in numbers during the latter part of this period, and the scientific spirit is more in

sympathy with Christianity than ever before, nevertheless this close contact, and the attempt at a fuller reconciliation of science and religion, has had a severe influence upon the experimental features of Christianity. It was inevitable that the emotional element, formerly so great a factor, should be modified by larger knowledge and greater dependence upon intellectual processes. As a result, much of the fervor born of the emotional is, among a large class, not at a premium, and in many instances discounted in favor of careful, judicial conclusions; so that religion, with some, takes on the aspect of a cold, mathematical problem.

Commercial Spirit.

The commercial spirit of the time is another force before which the evangelistic life has succumbed. The Protestant Evangelical Churches have grown rich, and have naturally grown worldly with their increasing wealth. Previous to this period the world had not become intoxicated with the "get-rich-quick" idea so prevalent now, and there was no thought of making the Church the means of commercial advancement. But in this age of overpowering commercial spirit all interests have come to be considered in terms of revenue; even the pulpit, in some instances,

has become a matter of dollars and cents, and, besides being bartered off for such, is so completely under the control of the commercial ideas dominating the pew that its real prophetic note is hushed, and that pungency of truth which accompanies the preaching of a man whose convictions are untrammeled, and which arouses the world and promotes aggressive evangelization, is greatly modified.

Perfunctory Service.

In the absence of distinct differences between the Church and the world, the cross is lifted with little pain, and largely smothered in roses. The Christian life is made accessible over smooth and thornless paths, and relieved of the genuine tests of forsaking all to follow Christ. This has ushered in an era of easy-going Christianity, making Christian service formal and perfunctory, having extracted from it that intense spirit which, in other days, gave the Church that strange influence which neither criticism nor opposition could resist.

Indifferent World.

Through the grafting of selfishness into the life of the Church, the compromising spirit of its members, and the timid spirit of the pulpit, the small fraction of time and the slight measure of enthusiasm

given by Christians to the service of Christ, in these times when life is most strenuous in all other respects, and we are committed in slavish fashion to public affairs, business pursuits, and social pleasures, men are not persuaded of the urgency of Christianity, and the thoughtless world becomes sealed with the spirit of indifference.

Evangelism in Disfavor.

And more alarming by far than the actual conditions here outlined is the fact that evangelism itself, the only possible remedy for them, has come into disfavor. The multiplication of professional evangelists, and the abuse of the evangelistic method by confining it to periodic and spasmodic efforts; the unstable and unsatisfactory results that to so great a degree have followed these services, in many instances amounting to reaction; the disreputable methods, neither healthy nor sane, of so large a class of these men; the tendency toward fanaticism dividing Churches and establishing sects,—have caused large numbers of intelligent and earnest ministers and Churches to become prejudiced against the entire evangelistic movement, and no saving substitute has been offered.

CHAPTER II.

THE AWAKENING.

1. Notes of Alarm.
2. The Pulpit Awakening.
3. The Religious Press.
4. Declarations of Educators and Reformers.
5. The Laity Aroused.
6. Call of Mission Fields.

CHAPTER II.

THE AWAKENING.

Notes of Alarm.

THERE is no better sign of a general awakening than the fact that the Church has become aware of the conditions, and is arousing itself and sending forth a note of alarm concerning the actual state of affairs and its apparent helplessness in the face of them. For the last decade the Church has become greatly concerned on account of its inability to reach the masses of people in our great cities; it is little more than holding its own anywhere, and in many instances not succeeding even in this. Saloons, clubs, and social orders move in and hold forth in splendid array, with increasing patronage, often in the very heart of cities; while the Church yields its ground, moves to a more favorable situation and more sympathetic surroundings. Multitudes throng our cities from foreign lands with unchristian principles; modern institutions of vice organize and sustain themselves; and the

Church stands in the face of these, more overcome than overcoming. The small towns and rural sections, in many instances, are quite as degenerate, and almost as little affected by evangelizing influences. Indeed, in many instances, the Church finds itself unable to perform successfully the work of evangelization to the extent of reaching the boys and girls and young people of her own society, Sunday-school, and homes, and save them for Christ and the Church.

Another significant fact to which the Church is awakening is, that notwithstanding the large numbers of Churches, and the people of wealth and influence allied with the same, she seems powerless to grapple with the evils of communities, even where Church members largely predominate. Still further, notwithstanding the emphasis placed upon the brotherhood of man and the principles of human equality, for which the Church is largely responsible, she nevertheless stands almost helpless in the face of the strained conditions of the civil and industrial world; unable to complete her task of inaugurating among men a practical brotherhood.

And, most appalling of all, as we stand at the door of the new century we find every na-

tion of darkness open before us, bidding us enter; with almost every barrier removed, the thing for which through these years the Church has been praying, and now finds itself unable to meet the demands of the answer to its own prayer; overwhelmed by the insufficiency of its resources by lack of consecration of money, of talent, and of life for the world's evangelization. These are among the best evidences in general of an evangelistic awakening.

The Pulpit is Awakening. When the prophetic note ceases to sound from the Christian pulpit the world may look out for a general decline in religion. From the standpoint of the pulpit we have been passing through a peculiar period for the last two decades. The Church has often found itself unable to secure congregations as formerly; preachers, feeling the embarrassment of the situation, unwilling to take the blame upon themselves, and unable to throw it upon their people, have resorted, often with the approval of their members, to novel methods of retaining their congregations. Many of the people, growing rich with the prosperity of these years, have cared only for the Church as a means of respectability, to whom the ministry have often yielded and lost their hold. Thus

the Churches have been emptied and made worldly; they have tied the preacher's hands and sealed his lips, until, in some places, forty or fifty Churches will not possess enough of vital Christian principle, much less of spiritual and unselfish purpose, to make the whole force equal to a "Gideon's band." And there are many faithful pastors whose Churches are so situated, or so constituted, or both, that they have n't the courage to undertake an evangelistic campaign; and yet are very greatly concerned, both because they do not want to be considered as not believing in such work, and because they feel that their Church is drifting away from the very heart of Christianity. In conversation with a pastor of a prominent Church, he said to me, "I do not know what I can do; it is useless to plan an old-time revival service; my people will not support it, and yet I want to do something." This feeling among earnest men in such Churches is growing more and more; the pulpit is awakening.

The Religious Press.

One of the most potent factors in arousing organizations and promoting sentiment in our day, is the public press. These men who dictate the matter from the editorial chair have the privilege of a wonder-

ful sweep of observation and a general survey of the world, unparalleled by any others. They are most naturally the first to catch the thought of the time and publish abroad the trend of sentiment. For the past few years the religious press has been sending forth the note of alarm, furnishing facts and figures, demonstrating to the Church its situation, and is now announcing repeated prophecies and promises of a great religious awakening.

Educators and Reformers.

When the Bible was taken from the public schools in this country, atheists, infidels, skeptics, and all the godless world rejoiced in an apparent triumph for unbelief, and in a great antichristian victory. But it was only apparent. While we may never see the Bible restored to the school-room, we shall never see its principles excluded from the teacher's desk. We will see renewed interest in Bible knowledge as a fundamental part of education, as men more and more realize the urgency of these principles in the completion of education; which must be considered in the light of character as well as knowledge.

Hence increased emphasis is placed upon religious home training, and vastly augmented is the devotion to these ideals in the Sunday-

school. The failure of the Church in these respects has started, through the leading educators of the land, "The Religious Education Society," whose aim is to keep the great saving truths of Christianity more fully and intelligently before the young and growingly informed age.

Touching this phase of the situation, nothing is more significant than the new trend given to the study of psychology, and this by men the most brilliant in the land. Professor James, of Harvard, from a purely scientific standpoint, writes his remarkable book on "Varieties of Religious Experience." The brilliant rising psychologist, Professor Coe, of the Northwestern, is giving himself largely to this phase of psychology; his books on religious education are working a marked transformation through such statements as these: "The making over of men can never be anything more than a necessary addendum or necessary preliminary to the central process of making men." "The world is saved chiefly through Christ's influence upon childhood." G. Stanley Hall said several years ago in our hearing substantially this: "Modern scientific religious scholarship is leading us directly back to what is now commonly called

'old-fashioned conversion' as the only safe basis of moral life and character."

In the realm of reformers in general there is the growing admission, at least, that "neither legislation nor constitution, though they can do something, can change the leopard's spots. . . . Any permanent solution of the difficulty must include a change in the general current of motive, a reversal of the accepted presupposition. Society must have a new heart. The whole industrial body is sick for want of it;" and there is a return from all departments of thought touching the world's sores, to Horace Bushnell's unique statement, "The soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul."

Laity Awakening. Consecrated laymen of large influence are here and there rising up to assert the need of the hour, and are not only giving theirs, but themselves in service as leaders of the people. Great conventions and schools of method, whose attendance is largely on the increase, are studying, from the ministry down through every rank of leadership, the best possible means of reaching the people with evangelizing effort. "It is also true beyond question that more effort has been put forth in

the building of church edifices than in building up souls for God's kingdom. Costly edifices have been multiplied, monuments of stone and brick, frequently only pride stimulators, while the greater work of securing, through an equal effort, monuments of God's grace, has been neglected." Said Comptroller Coler, of New York City: "I believe the great masses of the people in our great cities are away from the churches simply because the churches are away from them. It is a waste of money to build a two-hundred-thousand-dollar church, and then use it only once or twice a week."

Mission Fields.

The results of our mission fields, which have opened up so widely and invitingly and attracted and absorbed the attention and devotion of the Church at large, have been due almost entirely to evangelistic methods. The great revivals in India and elsewhere under the influence of a simple but profound evangelism have not only opened the way, but emphasized to all the supreme importance of this principle, if the kingdom is to fill the earth.

CHAPTER III.

THE OUTLOOK.

1. What of the Night?
2. Evangelistic Crisis.
3. Signs of Hope.
4. Less Defending of the Faith.
5. Acceptance of a Gospel of Evangelism.
6. In Spite of the Cross.
7. A Universal Feeling and Movement.

CHAPTER III.

THE OUTLOOK.

"WATCHMAN! what of the night? does the morning dawn?" I am not a pessimist; I can not be; my faith in God is too much wrapt up with the Divine declaration that sets forth the unfailing mission of Jesus Christ upon earth. For as I stand in the presence of the risen Lord before the challenge, "Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side," and I respond, "My Lord and my God," I must believe in His triumph and dominion. And let no one think that the world is indifferent at heart, when once it is aroused to the interest of the kingdom of Jesus Christ; for from beneath the strife, the rush, and rivalry of an apparently unbelieving and indifferent world, there is breathed from humble altars and humbler firesides, from earnest souls far removed from centers, and also from the busy marts of trade, the eager cry, "Watchman, what of the night?" Far down beneath the burning, seething, selfish

surface, this old world is still concerned, and silently prays, "Thy kingdom come."

There are signs of hope. But, I pray you, do not blind your vision, as so many heretofore have done, by demanding what kinds of signs shall appear and what the coming revival shall mean; for when your eyes are opened to the mountains filled with horses and chariots, if they are not such fiery visions as you had anticipated, it may be they are God's horses and God's chariots, and as surely His agencies ordained for Israel's redemption.

If you expect any prophet of God in these days to arise and declare to you the coming of a revival of religion that shall, in all respects, repeat the characteristics of those gone by, you are to be disappointed; and if those striking such notes catch your ear, beware of them: they are either uninformed as to God's methods or the actual signs of the times.

God does not repeat Himself. "I would never pray for an old-fashioned revival, because I want God's next new thing. If a man is praying for an old-fashioned revival, in all probability when God's visitation comes, he will not be conscious of it. I can quite imagine how, forty years ago, men remembering the

marvelous movement under Finney might have prayed for an old-fashioned revival such as that which accompanied his preaching. Then it is more likely that when God raised up Dwight Lyman Moody, such men would be out of sympathy with all his methods for a long while; for the notes of the two movements were utterly different. Or to go back still further before the great awakening under Finney, perhaps some prayed for an old-fashioned revival like that under Wesley and Whitefield. If so, they almost certainly lacked sympathy with the new notes at first. God fulfills Himself in many ways. In every new awakening there are fresh manifestations of God, new unfoldings of truth meeting the requirements of the age." "Christ is to be preached to changing men under constantly changing conditions. The substance of the Gospel lasts, but methods change and means vary as conditions are altered. This universe of ours, so far as we know it, is subject to constant change. No two tides ever sweep up the beach in the same orderly ripple; no two springtimes dawn in the same form after winter's long night; no two summer-tides blush toward the autumn in the same tints of beauty; but the great earth itself

still swings to and fro, jarless and noiseless. The great sun is still found in his appointed place at the proper hour, and the whole universe, moving through infinite space, keeps harmony with itself. So Jesus Christ is the same; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; so the Christianity of Christ is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever; so the Church founded by the Christ and by Christianity is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." The old-time spectacular may never appear. In form and method the old-time revival will not be repeated; but, in spirit and effect, what God ever did, He can still do; and what He can do, He will do, if we trust Him.

Evangelistic Crisis. For the past decade, at least, the Church has been face to face with an evangelistic crisis. With the revolt in general from dogma and tradition to fundamentals in Christian thought and teaching, there has been a similar attitude toward the dogmatizing methods of unintelligent evangelists. This kind of teaching which has emphasized so frequently some single phase of Christian truth—and often notions not even founded on fact—has thrown Christian experience and life out of balance; has sown dissension in Churches,

raised factions, and created an atmosphere in which many of the best people have not been able to live with peace. Thus Churches have been divided upon matters of very secondary moment; and all of this in an age when the desire of great Christian bodies has been, as never before, toward unity of thought and federation of activity, and the burying of slight differences in non-essentials. These have destroyed faith in evangelistic leadership.

Not less disastrous in its influence upon intelligent and earnest people has been the spirit and method of many professional evangelists. Their stock in trade has often been their ability to say most sarcastic things in abuse of Christians, and the extent to which they could please the godless world by holding up to ridicule members of Christian Churches who did not measure up to their particular standard, the amount of sensation they could create in a community, and the large number of people they could persuade under pressure to confess Christ; so great a percentage of whom no earnest pastor could possibly mature into a genuine Christian life and ally actively with the Church.

These conditions and practices had obtained

so extensively that in many communities it had become practically impossible to secure the attendance of the most respected people of the outside world upon evangelistic services. They had lost their faith in the sincerity of the men, the propriety of their methods, and were not willing to be caught in their traps. "Much of the discredit thrown upon the earnest expression of religion comes from an honest revulsion of feeling from those who have made the revival a trade. The very name 'revivalist' has often taken an unworthy meaning." With this revolt from unbalanced teaching, and revulsion from crude methods, the danger has been that the Church, for lack of intelligent, earnest, spiritual leadership, by which to find the happy medium in teaching and method that would appeal to all classes of people and be effective in reaching them, would drift into a mere ethical trend, and lose the supreme factor for Christianizing the world: that quickening power by which spirituality is sustained and the Church is made a conquering force. If we shall be able under the guidance of that spirit not confined to any age or method, but given for all time, to lead into all truth; to pass into the "new era," stripped though we may be of

much that has been more a burden than an inspiration, a source of controversy rather than a means of support; believing more in God than what is said about Him, less in a traditional or dogmatic Christ, and far more in a historic and living Christ,—then there will be hope for the Church and the world.

General, far-reaching, and abiding revivals that move the entire Christian world are periodical; not altogether because of an actual decline in religion preceding them, but because such are generated, not alone by new zeal and new methods, but by a new and perhaps better view of truth. The Wesleyan revival was promoted largely by the new vision of God's impartial plan of redemption and of the possibility of direct Christian consciousness. It was a revolution in religious thought that swung the Christian Church entirely away from its former moorings, and it has required these years of the Church's normal life to adjust it to an acceptance of these new views as a working basis. For as surely as "primitive Christianity had to disappear that Christianity might remain," so in every revolutionary period of Christian history Christianity has had to shake itself of much of its trappings, born of peculiar

periods, in order to survive; for in any age when the letter of things gets a greater hold upon the people than the spirit of them, be it with much controversy and strife, and even sense of loss, the letter must be subordinated to the spirit, and truth must again become superior to doctrine and method.

There is no doubt that the present basis of Christian thought is such as to enable a stronger and more comprehensive evangelistic movement than has ever before touched the world. The Church itself is better equipped from the standpoint of the reasonableness of its doctrinal positions, and also in consideration of the generally increased Christian intelligence, the popular position of Christian truth, and the material furnishings with which to do the work of seeking and saving the lost. The destructive period has lost to us nothing fundamental, but has set in better surroundings the essential truths, and cleared away a vast volume of traditional impedimenta. We have now entered upon the constructive period. The time has arrived for those in possession of leadership to show by actual product the possibilities of reaching and saving the world; and leaders are becoming conscious that the newer thought

must be able to bring with it a new life, and the vastly increased machinery must be brought under the dominance of a new power, or of the old power renewed.

Signs of Hope.

Rising out of the mist and uncertainty of this crisis there are signs of hope. First of all, because, even with the apparent decline in evangelistic movements, it is clearly evident that the ideals of Christianity are not only in a better setting, but have a stronger hold upon the world than ever before; so that, even during this changing and unsettled period, we have been moving farther away from the cruder interpretations of Christianity, and coming nearer to the very first principles of the Master. And while we have been dropping out some of the machinery for which there seems to be no further use, and returning to a simpler form of the kingdom, it is a form less of theory, but far more vital. In other words, there is evidence that we are beginning over again with the ideas that operated in the early organization of the Christian forces, when they "added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Our reason for believing that this is a hopeful sign is, that it puts us upon the most permanent basis of Christian effort; for if the

ultimate goal of Christianity is a kingdom such as the Master outlined, then the ultimate agency, whether Church or society, must be a band of Christian men and women with firm purpose, fine sensibilities, bound together in the simplest form, to do what the Master, first teaching by precept and by example, commissioned His disciples to do when He sent them forth. Two things characterized the Church in the beginning: a personal devotion to Christ which kindled zeal for others; and the accompaniment of a Divine power (the Holy Spirit), illuminating, directing, and also melting the opposing forces, which gave the disciples confidence in the Christ and His Gospel. The Christian Church is fast learning that "devotion to Christ is the dynamic of Christianity," and that individual work through loyalty to Him is not only natural, but inevitable; it is also learning concerning organization, that spiritual warmth and power resulting from informally assembled personalities "of one accord" is yet to be the leaven of the earth.

Less Defending of the Faith.

Another hopeful sign is in the more intelligent Christian teaching. The ministry of to-day, in remote places as well as in centers, in small as well as great

Churches, have a better preparation for their very responsible mission of teaching the Gospel of Christ in its completeness. The hobby-riders of the past are fast betaking themselves to those insignificant sects that subsist on these things, while these denominations themselves are gradually disappearing under the influence of a truer conception of faith and life. The evangelist or pastor who claims some peculiar gift, a kind of patent right on truth and experience, is no longer much in demand; for the people are finding a "better way," and the world is looking toward the Church of Christ with a larger degree of confidence, because of the greater emphasis placed upon what men do, and how they live, as the real evidence of conversion.

Acceptance of Gospel of Evangelism.

There are evidences on every hand of the acceptance of, and renewed desire for, an evangelistic gospel. "For some of us the old evangelism has lost its power. Many of you have felt, as I certainly have, that a great gulf has been digged between culture and evangelistic fervor. Our generation has known but one man to whom the two things were blended—Henry Drummond. Professor Drummond was a scientist, a theistic

evolutionist, but, first of all and above all, he was an evangelist. In him culture and fervor were united in ideal relations. He had the intellect of the scholar; he had also the flaming heart of an apostle. And now that Drummond has gone, we have all longed for a man who would preach the great simplicities, and embody evangelism plus reasonableness." This statement coming from a man of such tendencies of thought, and such a position of influence, is extremely significant; and we believe it is only an indication of what is felt by other men in the Christian pulpits similarly situated. We speak from experience as well as observation, and say that we believe men are ready as never before to accept an evangelistic gospel which appeals to the best that is in them, and magnifies the saving of human life.

In Spite of the Cross.

We must take into consideration what it costs certain classes of people to ally themselves with a genuine evangelistic type of Christianity. The all-absorbing commercial life in these days of exceeding material prosperity, and the strife and rivalry in the commercial and industrial world, are paralyzing in the extreme to the Sermon on the Mount. The excessive luxury of social life, and the fri-

volities and worldliness attendant upon it, hedge the way to the real life of apostleship with Jesus in seeking and saving the lost; yet from the ranks of the striving, self-seeking world, both of commerce and society, are coming in increasing numbers those who, in spite of the cross, have become enamored of the spirit of the Master, and are anxious to go about doing good.

The more intelligent so-called middle classes, wearying of the everlasting round of pleasure, realizing its utter emptiness, are not only favorable to, but show an eagerness for, an evangelism that comes with the message of a "life more abundant," offering not mere negations but positive features that enrich the soul and make life worth living. It must be evident to all that in the most vital sense the evangelism of to-day is more exacting than ever before, because it emphasizes "obedience rather than sacrifice," and demands the doing of God's will if men are to find Him and know Him. It declares that the way of the cross is not a mere sentiment, the highest expression of which is in raising the hand, standing in public, or even coming to the sacred altar, but in surrendering one's self to do the most Christ-like things of a self-denying religion. When in the face of

this ruggedness and even rigidness of demands, people from all ranks, with Paul, count not their lives dear to themselves, but yield themselves so completely to this sublime ideal of "he that loseth his life shall find it" until, with him, they can say, "For to me to live is Christ," is a splendid token of the prevailing power of evangelistic Christianity.

A Universal Feeling and Movement.

That there are signs hopeful of a widespread and universal revival is in no way better indicated than by what appears to be a universal feeling and movement throughout the entire Christian world. Denominations like the Methodist and smaller bodies of the same principles and spirit, who are by their very traditions committed to evangelism, have been seriously lamenting, and severely arraigning themselves for failure in increasing their membership. In some instances they have been obliged to reckon with a net loss. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, moved by the situation, has appointed a Commission on Aggressive Evangelism, which is intended to arouse the whole great Church to an earnest forward movement. The Presbyterian Church for the last few years has been more active, perhaps,

than any other denomination, adopting many of the Methodist practices of evangelism till some Churches of this staid body have taken on fervor that has put to shame the Methodists; while the Congregationalists, hardest of all perhaps to bring to the consideration of the need of real aggressive evangelism, are treating it in their councils as the supreme issue, and starting movements of an evangelistic order even in their most ethically buttressed centers.

As surely as the singing of the robin in springtime, the pushing of the blade of grass and the tiny shrub from beneath the crusted earth, anticipate the coming of summer, so surely this urgency of the Christian world to throw off the mantle of indifference and lift itself from the burden of commercial interests, and to sing a new note of cheer and hope, is an unquestioned promise of the full springtime of new life, with "showers of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Part II.

PRESENT-DAY EVANGELISM.

INTRODUCTION.

INTRODUCTION.

Not a little is being said in these days in criticism of the term "present-day evangelism." Nevertheless it is just as fair to use the term "present-day evangelism," and just as necessary in order to be thoroughly understood, as to talk of present-day education and present-day commerce. Education is still education, and commerce is still commerce. Resources behind them, necessity for them, principles governing them, may not have changed, but the method of conducting them, the product or expression, have so vastly changed that there is a new education and a new commerce.

So divine resources may not change, and human needs do not change; but no one will be so foolish as to contend that the mode of Christian operation and the outward expressions of religious life have not changed; there is a new theology, and there is a new evangelism. Not because God has changed, or man has changed, but because environment has changed; hence methods must change, and ex-

pressions will change. The term "present-day evangelism" is simply an accommodated phrase to distinguish the method and expression from former times for the purpose of a better understanding. Evangelism is not Christianity; it is the Christian force in operation as the means of generating and extending Christianity. So when men fear the term "new evangelism" they seem to conceive that the disturbing of evangelism is the disturbing of Christianity; just as many people feared that the Revised Version of the Bible was dangerous, because to change any interpretations was disastrous, though the new version brought God far nearer. They mistake the written word for the living God, and the book that reveals religion for religion itself. So some criticise "new evangelism," because they make evangelism to mean Christianity rather than a means of furthering Christianity.

We must understand that the whole setting of human thought and life has changed; that the religious problems which perplexed the world a quarter or half century ago are not the problems of to-day. Whatever of skepticism there is, is a skepticism that can never be met by the old statements and arguments. And

so far as determining what conduct is necessary to the Christian life, we must appreciate that the weights that have to be laid aside, and the customs that have to be sacrificed, are not the same in all ages, and that the entrances to heart and life are not the same. The evangelist who will reach the mind of to-day must often seek a new avenue, and he who would appeal to the heart, move the feelings, and persuade to action, must use other means to break the fetters of sin that bind.

It requires only a glance to see the reasonableness of this. Touching the unbelief of the intellect, we readily observe that bold, denying, and denouncing atheism is substantially a thing of the past. It is only an inquiring doubt or a stumbling faith that we have to meet. The hitherto apparent conflict between science and religion has disappeared; both because of a better science and a saner conception of religion from the standpoint of a less literal interpretation of Scripture, there is no more conflict. The problem is no longer that of the despised Nazarene and unpopular position of Christianity, but the compromising spirit of a nominal Christianity. And there are such vast modifications of many minor features of Chris-

tianity that it becomes necessary to consider how men look upon the Christian life. The evidences demanded are not as formerly. In Jesus' time the common people were especially impressed by the miraculous,—nothing else seemed to satisfy; so in most periods past of great revivals, the masses were mostly influenced by the supernaturalness of the work, the unusual occurrences; but the mass of men care little for that to-day; they ask for a simple but straightforward face about, of the Zaccheus type.

Inasmuch as evangelism is the method of the kingdom, those who apply it must be willing and able to make all needful modifications in order to meet the conditions of life,—"all things to all men;" hence the term "present-day evangelism."

CHAPTER I.

THE PROFESSIONAL EVANGELIST.

1. His Place in the Church.
2. He may be a Dangerous Man.
3. He must not be a Self-Seeker.
4. He should be a Leader.
5. His Future Usefulness.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROFESSIONAL EVANGELIST.

INASMUCH as the professional evangelist is a part of the present evangelistic method, this seems to be the proper place for a brief consideration of his relation to present-day evangelism. No one will speak lightly of the evangelist if his position is properly defined and his work honorably pursued.

The evangelist had a place in the functions of the ministry of the early Church, in which "He gave some, apostles; He gave some, prophets; He gave some, evangelists; He gave some, pastors and teachers." It is true, the work of the evangelist at that time is by no means clearly defined, and it is also true beyond question that his office was inferior from the standpoint of gifts and of authority, yet it was a part of the divinely ordered ministry of the early Christian Church; and whatever may be said in reflection upon the orders of ministry worked out by a later hierarchy, the simple

forms of ministry instituted in the days of the apostles will ever hold their place of relative importance in the Christian world so long as an organized Church and a formal ministry are necessary to the kingdom of God. Best authorities have inferred that the evangelist was a detached man of lesser gifts and authority; going about as a missionary among the unchurched, or a helper of pastors. The departure of modern evangelism from this standard is in the self-constituted evangelist, rather than by authority and appointment of the Church, as other forms of ministry. This has caused this entire department of the ministry to be depreciated, and has greatly diminished the force of the office, as well as crippled the work of evangelism.

But we must not attach all the blame to the evangelist; for as surely as the Church is largely what the ministry make it, so the Church must create its ministry; and when it complains of self-appointed evangelists it must remember that this has been due to the failure of the Church to raise up, call, and appoint to her ministry men of gifts and graces, and make provision for them in her economy, or train an evangelistic ministry in her regular orders; for,

in spite of her complaints, she has been so lacking in consecration to evangelism that for a quarter of a century these men have been in many instances her only salvation.

The professional evangelist has occupied a large place and had no little part in the evangelizing mission of the Church; so much so, that he has seemed to be almost indispensable. But a reaction has set in, and the Church is coming to feel that, while much of his labor has been attended by good results, on the whole he has left the Church in a chronic, sickly state, which demands periodic attendance upon his part, and can do nothing without him; therefore revivals under his leadership have, of late, largely diminished. And yet for this condition the evangelist must not be held altogether responsible; for certainly the Church, as a whole, with its members, officials, and various ranks of ministry, ought to be greater than this detached portion, and she must be responsible for her lack of faith, enterprise, and consecration to this great work of evangelization; for she has never at any time through this period yielded the conviction that the world *must* be evangelized, and yet she has been willing, apparently, to commit this work to men whose

methods, on the whole, she has not favored and has often severely criticised.

He May Be a Dangerous Man.

The evangelist may become a dangerous man by virtue of the very peculiar power which is his. He is always such when he makes himself indispensable to the Church. The revolt against the evangelist, in the last decade or more, has been due almost entirely to the feeling which he has created by trying to make himself indispensable. He has gone to the Church, and often left it with an effort to convey the impression that nothing of a truly evangelistic order can possibly be accomplished apart from him. He may do this by assuming entire leadership, which in many instances makes him almost a dictator, while there. He may do it by insisting also upon his particular patent methods as the only way in which men may be saved. He may become a menace to both the ministry and the Church by assuming, if not asserting, that he preaches the Gospel while most of the preachers do not, if he annuls all truth that is not stamped with his own peculiar seal of orthodoxy, if he takes delight in belittling the present-day ministry, and in berating the Church life.

That was a very fitting prayer the dear old

brother offered when the evangelist, having lost patience, discoursed for a half hour to the Official Board, scoring them most severely; then called upon this good official brother, who offered the following: "Lord, forgive the dear brother for the mean things he has said about us. Amen."

He Must Not Be a Self-Seeker.

An evangelist may be made of the same clay as other folks, "a man of like passions" and desires. He may be a man of possibilities and responsibilities, but he must keep ever to the front a self-sacrificing spirit. Nothing more disqualifies a preacher than selfishness, and in no other class of the ministry is this so noticeable as among those sent especially to rescue the perishing. Not long ago scores of people walked from a burning building, and escaped death upon a bridge of human lives. Genuine evangelism comes only by a real incarnation that involves sacrifice and risk: "Though rich, He became poor," counting not even His life dear unto Himself, and went all the way to Calvary; and the man who can not impress a people with the heroic, self-denying spirit in his efforts to save them, will not be able to persuade them to a better life. Therefore, the evangelist who is exacting

of money and can not make terms with Churches that will make it possible to disregard largely all money considerations in time of services, or trust the free-will offering of the people, is not likely to succeed. We well remember the self-denying spirit of an apparently devoted pastor who was giving himself to evangelistic work, surrendering a first-class pulpit with substantial salary; and we thought it heroic; but in less than six months no Churches were large enough to give him suitable support, and in a very few years it was reported he was earning three times as much as when in the regular ministry, having refused to go anywhere without a large stipulation and great union services. When such a man is gone, it is likely to be felt that his work was greatly modified by his selfishness.

He Should Be a Leader.

An evangelist must have the qualities of leadership, although he had better not appear too much as such. He certainly must not be officious. He should be a pleasing preacher, for he is to win; he must be magnetic, for he is to draw; he must be well-balanced, for he is to seal the destiny of people by his directions and impressions. He may not be a scholar in the broadest sense, but he must

be intelligent; he should not pose as a teacher unless he possesses the wisdom of a teacher; that is, the function of a pastor with "line upon line." He should never be a debater, but a messenger, a herald; and as such he may be an inspiration, a power, and a man in demand.

His Future Usefulness. If the evangelist can be more than he has been, an assistant of pastors rather than the man with the reins usurping all prerogatives and posing as prophet, teacher, and administrator, he will still be a much needed and useful man. The evangelist is capable of inspiring the Church as no other man can. They do not know him; his very calling makes him to them as a "voice in the wilderness" or a bringer of good tidings. They have heard of his great revivals and his big crowds, and how the town was moved; they go and listen, believe and obey; they must, for men are superstitious, and the leader leads and the multitudes still flock to the Jordan when a John the Baptist stands by its banks. When he comes, the people are always expectant, and expectancy is no little part of faith. He is hopeful as no local pastor can be; he sees people at their best, the Church at its best; his faith is not dampened by what a pastor knows;

he is not embarrassed by the frowns of a congregation when some speak or pray; he can have unusual faith in humanity; and seeing continuous results from his ministry, even sometimes beyond what is actual, he becomes a man of optimism, and carries with him the swing of victory. Therefore, the evangelist will still occupy a place of importance in the ministry; and it is hoped the Church will make provision for a reasonable number, and lay her hands on men of finest spirit and choicest gifts with as much of culture as the age requires, and set them apart for this work, and keep them in close touch with all her interests. For evangelists will ever be needful in limited numbers; needful to assist overburdened pastors of great Churches; necessary occasionally in all Churches to usher in a new era of evangelistic life, or to lead in capturing a difficult situation; and, having given special attention and had wide observation, needful occasionally to fire pastors and Churches anew with evangelistic zeal.

CHAPTER II.

THE MEETINGS.

1. Special Services.
2. Protracted Meetings.
3. The Management of the Meetings.
4. Physical Attitudes.
5. Personal Work.
6. The Man Between.
7. The Emotions, Their Power.
8. The Emotions, Their Peril.
9. The Holy Spirit.
10. The Appeal.

CHAPTER II.

THE MEETINGS.

It is no unimportant part of the matter to decide when to hold meetings, how long to continue them, and by what plan to conduct them. We remark, first of all, that there are times and conditions when special services should never be held. A pastor sometimes feels that he must do something of an evangelistic order, and has little idea, perhaps, that anything will result, but announces two or three weeks of special services. Special services should never be held simply to keep up appearances, for if nothing is expected, nothing will be accomplished, and the Church will believe less in revivals as the result, while the outside world moves on with an added degree of indifference. Unless by some exceptionally providential circumstance or condition in the Church or community, a series of meetings should not be held without careful, earnest preparation. It may be of two weeks, it may be of two months, or it may be of two years; and if with that prepa-

ration a revival is not already kindled, do not multiply services. In these days of strenuous life, multiplying services must be justified either by a reasonable consecration upon the part of the Church "to fight it out on this line," or a condition in the Church or community which makes a revival spontaneous.

Then, there are Churches in which it would be better not to hold a series of meetings for three years. We have in mind such a Church now,—one of the grand old Churches in the land, which has been declining for some years, and, we believe, largely because, being evangelistic in its nature, it has had evangelists and special meetings year after year; sometimes holding them for a month, sometimes two or three series of meetings in a season, until the Church has become the rallying place of a class of Christians who feed upon the effervescence of emotionalism and are unstable and unreliable; whose zeal quickly burns out and leaves them, the remainder of the time, indifferent to the most vital interests of the Church. The revival meeting, under special management and high pressure, has created a disease, and there is a lack of sturdy, earnest, straightforward Christian life and effort as a matter of prin-

ciple. The people need to be taught, trained, built up in systematic devotion, and let evangelism come normally through ordinary services. For a year or two this would be the best kind of treatment for such a Church.

Services should not be held when conditions in a community are unfavorable. Sometimes an earnest, well-meaning pastor rushes into services in the face of conditions of sickness or weather or worldly absorptions, that, to say the least, greatly disadvantage his work. He thinks the Lord's work should not be postponed because weather is unfavorable, the people sick or absorbed in worldly enterprises; but a wiser pastor will consider these, and use his forces to the best advantage. Why not take advantage of the lenten season when, at least nominally, the Christian world is at its best, and counter influences greatly modified? This is much better than the Week of Prayer, so-called. But even this idea may be overworked until, among Christians, it has become perfunctory and lifeless, and, to the world, an excuse for every-day religion.

Protracted Meetings.

"Every minister of Jesus Christ ought occasionally to hold meetings where he urges immediate decision, and gives

the opportunity for the same." Yet may not the "old protracted meeting" idea be a mistake in many Churches? When we announce a long series of services stretching over several weeks, are we not faced by two conditions,—first, the fact that the people who do not care for such services determine to take no part, or at least wait until they are urged into it from an appeal to their loyalty; and another fact, that the extended plan fails of immediate concentration of people and energy?

It would be wise for many pastors who are so situated to arrange for a single week of services, culminating on Sunday with a united effort of all departments of the Church making it a real day of ingathering. Such a service could be planned for in the mind of the pastor several weeks in advance, with all his effort directed toward it, until there prevails a good preparatory spirit; then, when the time draws near, let an effort be made to entirely pre-empt that week, and ask the people to concentrate their time and energy for one week only; thus even the indifferent might be persuaded, out of loyalty to their pastor, if for no other reason, to support it. Let Sunday's work be thoroughly planned; morning service a strong, con-

vincing sermon; Sunday-school given over to an earnest but judicious evangelistic effort; the teachers well prepared for this; at 3.30 a meeting for men only,—it can be made very fruitful in any community; concluding with an enthusiastic evangelistic service at night. This plan, of course, would not make impossible the announcement on Sunday of another week of services, if the interest should warrant it; for the people will be glad by this time to continue, if results are sufficiently in evidence. We have tried this plan in a number and variety of places with excellent results, and with a greatly improved feeling toward revival meetings upon the part of the community; leaving an impression that the Church is alive, and does not have to be "worked up" to a revival pitch by several weeks of "hammering away."

The Management.

There are two extreme conditions in general that need to be avoided. One is a stiff formality that paralyzes by its frigidness. If there is any particular religious service in which there should be life, warmth, and spontaneity, it ought to be in a revival service. Nothing is surer to kill such a service than formal and measured music, long, lifeless prayers, and dogmatic, prosy sermons. These

do not create an atmosphere that makes it easy for men to break to the freedom of a new life.

On the other hand, we are convinced that there has been quite as much injury in the crude, boisterous informality with which such services have often been conducted. A reasonable amount of dignity is necessary to any religious service that is to be of lasting virtue. Men sometimes step so far beneath the dignity of Church and pulpit in their method of advertising and conducting services, that, in their determined attempt to "popularize the services, they simply vulgarize them." We have had "cyclone evangelists," who run over the backs of the pews and strain every physical power to attract attention, and the people go as they go to the theater. Some are caught, but a multitude are disgusted, and the Church and religion greatly depreciated. Some attempt funny stories, make men laugh and then cry; but when a thoughtful person has retired from such service, although he may have joined in it all, he is disgusted with reflection, for he knows this is no part of religion.

To conduct a service by ingeniously and attractively advertising it, by making it warm, inviting, and lively, even to the point of enthu-

siasm, and yet keep it within the bounds of propriety and dignity, should be the careful study of every evangelist; for only then can you secure results on the one hand, and maintain continued confidence on the other.

Physical Attitudes. There are certain physical attitudes which have been used to great advantage in assisting men to the submission of life and the exercise of faith which issue in conversion; and in so far as these are used with a clear understanding of their significance, their use is justified; for it is the policy of Christianity to make the way as accessible as possible, adopting all legitimate expediences, or becoming "all things to all men." The altar service has possibly been utilized to as much advantage as any other agency. There is about it a religious appropriateness, something in keeping with the seriousness of the moment. It has been fundamental to religious worship. But even the altar service should be guarded lest too much importance be attached to a mere form. It should never be made a place where special premium is offered to those who seek salvation. Indeed, it is a grave mistake to attach so much importance to any physical attitude. So great a matter as personal salvation

should never hinge upon a place or a posture; if it does, doubt and uncertainty are likely to follow. Extreme urgency should also be carefully guarded against. There are fitting times for insistence and importunity; but this must be with great discretion, or it will react upon the individual or meeting. Invitations in public and standing tests have their places reasonably utilized; but they have been overworked, until now, in many places, it is difficult to get an honest expression from any congregation. It is possible that in these days the after meeting in the presence of largely sympathetic persons will result in most honest and decisive influence. We have found that requesting the congregation to bow their heads in prayer in such a service, and after a short season of prayer, while all are in the attitude of reverence, with the absence of that embarrassment that comes from the gaze of a congregation, there may be had an expression from honest, earnest souls which would not otherwise be gained. This may seem, to some, making the way too easy; but we are convinced, from the study of the methods of Jesus of Nazareth, that He sought not to make it most difficult,

but, without compromising, as easy as possible for souls to enter His kingdom.

Personal Work.

Personal work is the one feature of evangelistic method that is to-day receiving special attention. Inasmuch as revival effort that seeks to repeat the old-time sweeping influences seems to have failed, earnest Christians have resorted to personal work; and this is more and more to be the method of the future. But personal work must also be carefully guarded. Great discretion must be used, and only such persons as have rare influence should ever approach others, or be allowed to do so, in the midst of a public congregation. We must recognize the force of every man an evangelist, but we must shift the emphasis from bringing men to Christ to taking Christ to men. Since beginning the writing of this chapter we received the following note:

"Dear Sir,—I did not have an opportunity to say to you that you said some very true and needed things in our meeting. We have several persons in our Church below the average in intelligence and consistency, who always come to the front in revival services, 'buttonholing' every outsider in such a way that they are only

too glad to escape from them, and also to stay away from all further services. I thank you for your wise, candid opinions as expressed in our meeting."

The personal work that should be urged upon our people is a work outside the Church service; for if the workers have never shown any interest in the same persons apart from revival occasions, even very worthy people may have little influence; and this personal work should not usually be with direct and abrupt manner, but by making use of such opportunities as come to every earnest Christian who is ever attentive to his Master's business, opportunities when such a subject can be introduced with effectiveness. Great harm is done in boldly pushing one's self into places where all is unfavorable and inappropriate. This brings serious matter into ridicule, and casts pearls before swine. We must teach our people that the only consistent and successful personal work of the future will be in bringing men one by one through the multiplied influence of single personalities; thus in every-day life, as well as in distinctive religious service, Christian men realize that their mission is to make the man next

to them feel that he would like to be, ought to be, and must be a Christian.

The Man Between.

The personal manner and attitude of the evangelist is of vital consideration in evangelistic method. In no place does the minister of the Gospel stand on so delicate ground as when dealing with those who are feeling their way into the kingdom of God. He ought to be sensitive to the delicacy of such a place; he is on holy ground, and should tread softly; this is no place for eccentricity or coarseness. The evangelist may assume too much the attitude of the priest. He should never presume the lack of earnestness or sincerity upon the part of seekers who are apparently doing their best to find the light, and raise in their minds unnecessary doubt; neither should he presume to pronounce salvation an accomplished fact; he may suitably stay by, direct, assure, and answer all questions as far as possible; but he must remember that he may go thus far and no farther; beyond is the "Holy of Holies," and only the Divine Spirit may conduct the soul and seal the Divine approval.

It is a serious mistake to give assurance to seeking souls which is to no human agent au-

thorized. Matters of consciousness we are not sure of until we are sure of them; we may have opinions born of honest statements, but they are only opinions, and will not survive. The challenge of old was, "Come and see;" it was not what was said about Christ, but Christ Himself who was to satisfy. The Messiah was found when He was found. We may define at great length of theological statement who Jesus Christ is; but He is never Divine until, with those of old, we have seen Him face to face. Then can we say, "We have found the Messiah." There are many honest seekers like Nicodemus, who know already that He is "a Teacher sent from God;" they know much about Him, but it is a mistake to direct such souls to find satisfaction in added opinions; as, for instance, to say, "Now, if you just do this, you must be saved. Believe that you are, and you are." Nothing is more disastrous to faith than this method of procedure. We can say, "Behold the Lamb of God;" we can set Him forth in the best possible light, and do all in our power to aid vision; but no man ever sees, until he does see; and when he does, he asks no other assurance, but exclaims, I have found the Messiah; whereas I was once blind, now I

see. The evangelist is on the wrong track when he continually inquires, "How do you feel?" It is his duty more frequently to ask, "What is your purpose?" Genuine religious feeling must be spontaneous, and not sought for as such; feelings thus awakened, may become very poor indications of Christian purpose.

The Emotions, Their Power and Peril.

The late Dr. Parker said, not long before his death, "There is a great deal of prejudice against emotion; but without emotion religion is a grate, well-filled, with no match to light it." "Do not," said he, "be afraid of emotion and Methodist fervor. Some Methodists are afraid of their own Methodism." President Eliot, of Harvard, in an address before ministers in Boston, not long ago, said, "One of the weaknesses of the Church, especially the Methodist, has been its cultivation of the emotional." The *Daily Press,* of New York City, commenting upon his remarks, said:

"President Eliot belongs to that pre-eminently respectable Christian body of people known as Unitarians. They began business about the same time; the results are that the Methodists have 56,000 churches, 38,000 ministers, 6,000,000 members, and property worth

$200,000,000. The Unitarians have 453 churches, 554 ministers, 61,000 members, and property worth $10,000,000. The Methodists had the emotion, the Unitarians had not. The results need no comment."

The Christian world has given Methodism the title, "Christianity in earnest." The result of her work has certainly justified this; for, in view of the small way in which she began, with the limited resources that for years she possessed, evidence is given that there must have been some peculiar force by which these people were moved to the accomplishment of so great things. Whatever may be the weakness or strength of such movements, one thing is certainly true, that we only get this product where the emotions are stirred.

There is a prevailing notion in non-evangelistic circles that emotions and intellect have little correspondence in religion; but "belief is a mental state which might as well be classed under emotion as under thinking, because it combines both elements." "One may feel intensely concerning a certain subject and be all the better student." "Hence the emotions are not, as was formerly thought, entirely hostile to intellectual action." "Emotion often quick-

ens the perception, burns things indelibly into the memory, and doubles the rapidity of thought."

The secret of power in connection with emotion is due to considering its changeableness. "Strike when the emotional iron is hot, ought to be the maxim; for emotion does not generally remain long at its height. An agent for Grant's 'Memoirs' said that the week following the General's death, there was harder work every day to make a sale, so quickly did popular grief decline. A certain city, at the time of Lincoln's death, talked of raising funds for a monument. Had the paper been circulated at once, a million would have been subscribed within a week. But time passed, and much difficulty was experienced in getting subscriptions." There are times when a congregation have been thinking seriously with "line upon line," and are intellectually persuaded when an appeal may properly be made with all the pressure that good sense and good taste will allow; for only then and thus can we hope to rescue many people from that apathy of will and paralysis of feeling that holds them bound against their deepest convictions. Thus emotion is a great factor in revival work; it serves very

much as a tide to carry helpless souls over the bar into the harbor of safety.

Peril of Emotion. But emotions are full of peril if overworked and not guarded. There is great danger in conducting a revival service by men of magnetic power and ability to direct to action. There is no doubt that the disrepute of evangelism in many quarters is due largely to the extreme effort to work the emotions out of correspondence with judgment and will.

Men have conscientiously believed that the more deeply feelings were moved, and the more fully persons became completely submissive to an all-pervading emotionalism, the greater the evidence of the supernatural. But we must understand that the supernatural thing about Christianity is not feeling, but life. The unfortunate thing about much evangelistic method, has been that men have often "appealed to something less than the best." "Religion thus becomes reactionary, rather than progressive."

"After a revival of religion in a community, there are too frequently found heart-burnings and misunderstandings, which have come because the new fervor has not been properly tempered by a judicial fairness of mind." "Who

has not met in every evangelistic service scores of people who really wanted to lead a Christian life, who had been at some time brought under tremendous pressure, and had taken a step they were not ready for, and had left the meeting to live a most uncomfortable life, that made them ever after harder to reach? "Better have a dozen people constrained, convicted, converted, than a hundred caught in some emotional movement, in which there was no real depth of conviction and result."

The weakness of evangelism is too often due to excessive dependence upon mechanical methods rather than Divine truth and the Spirit. We ought never to forget that the supreme reason for method is its use in bringing decision and action. Any method that goes beyond truth and the Divine Spirit simply subverts the only agencies that have converting power. Machinery has no saving power; it simply assists in bringing the soul to co-operate with or submit to the Spirit's quickening power. It is probable that one reason why we do not witness so many sweeping revivals is because men avoid what they have come to believe are dangerous influences, and will not follow up a meeting of exciting nature. There have been

too many manufactured revivals, with emphasis upon how things are done. This appalling lack of faith in revivalism is because people believe the Church has been humbugged by machinery whose products were not real but apparent. This is true to so great an extent that even the apparent success no longer attends.

Pentecost had no method; the Reformation was as spontaneous as life; it burned in and burst out of a great soul. Wesley was a man most regardful of expediencies, and had no iron-clad forms of revivalism. Finney, Edwards, Moody, and all other great evangelists, have honored truth and the Holy Spirit. Past revivalism has been too revolutionary in its method. As a revolutionary movement, Christianity is not successful; it does revolutionize, but is not revolutionary. Revolutions do not have saving power in them; they may turn things upside down, but they leave them the same in the concrete; they still have to be turned inside out by a transforming power that sentiment or method can not reach. Jesus knew that those who would crown Him to-day, would crucify Him to-morrow. We can not depend upon sweeping men into the kingdom by sentiment or machinery, upon a tide of feel-

ing, or by magnetic leadership. Conversions should be attended by an intelligent choice, a deep feeling of the supremacy of the purpose, and an earnest desire for all possible help to attain that for which a Christian life stands. In the last twenty-five years the Church has spent vast sums of money in *method*, only to leave us paralyzed by virtue of a mechanical spirituality born of religious gymnastics. Revivals are not gotten up; they come down, not by emphasis upon "born again" by some new notion, but "born from above" by a new life power. We want the old-time revival, but we want it older than our generation. We want it to go back to that day that had no machinery, when men believed in God and the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and the intelligent, free, moral agency on the other.

The Holy Spirit.

The plan of this discussion does not call for a consideration of the office and mission of the Holy Spirit, except, perhaps, a brief mention of the dangers of some present-day interpretations. The power and efficiency of the Holy Spirit must always be assumed in the work of evangelism. To discount this is to deprive the Church of the gift of all gifts; and the evangelist who does not

believe in, and seek to possess, this gift, may as well lay down his task before he begins. There is no substitute.

"Christianity is not merely a set of ideas." Important as these may be, the world will not be saved by ideas; nor can we save the world by spiritless methods. Christianity is not a method; it is a power that protrudes beyond all ideas, and outstrips all methods. It is important to present-day evangelism that this greatest evangelistic gift be rescued from the crude, materialistic conception of certain defined mechanical processes. Some preachers, instead of bringing men under the influence of the Spirit, simply bring them under the influence of an idea about the Spirit. Not a little effort has been given to emphasizing the personal as over against the impersonal, and yet it is doubtful if this has contributed to a greater manifestation of the Spirit. Even the idea of a personal God has no very strong hold upon the human mind; to the common people, God is more a power than a person. The only Divine Person in the Trinity we know, is the Divine Son; because we know Him, we know the Father. To the simple folk we are, the Holy Spirit will always signify more as a mys-

terious, all-pervading power, than as a clearly defined personality. And it is a mistake to try to so define the indefinable as to make the Holy Spirit more a limited idea than an unlimited power.

Nothing is more important to the evangelist than to keep ever before him that the Christian religion is ordered to reach the simplest minds, and its principles and operations are so fashioned. An evangelist needs to be intelligent, but not self-conscious; not obliged to think about terms and methods, but susceptible to that influence, mysterious, subtle, and mighty, which makes both the man and his message agents of God, by which the Gospel becomes the power unto salvation. We need also to rescue the Holy Spirit from the historical and traditional conception, which has limited the power by insisting upon the exact renewal of expressions belonging to conditions long since past. There is something amazing about that strange power which accompanied the disciples of Jesus as they went forth, and one readily consents that, "had the Holy Spirit not come, the Christian Church would never have conquered; nay, . . . never have been born." But the men who were the agents of these

manifestations had no theory of the Holy Spirit; they scarcely appreciated what the Master meant when He said, "I will not leave you comfortless," helpless; yet through their agency the Spirit's power was supreme.

Men who pray for another Pentecost, often help to paralyze the faith in a gift that was to be for all time by making a fetich of place and method and expression, magnifying the outward appearance rather than the real substance. It is not advantageous to the ushering in of a revival of religion to be always looking backward and magnifying the manifestations of Divine power through means and methods of days gone by. "O for the days of Wesley, Whitefield, Luther, the apostles!" What we ought to say is, "O for the belief that the same Jesus who ascended has come back again, and that He is here in the universal representation of the Holy Spirit, as truly as He was in the city of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost!" "People pray for a fuller outpouring of the Spirit of God, a new Pentecost. You do not need to pray for fresh fire; the fire is burning, if you will only let Him baptize you in it. You need not pray for a rushing, mighty wind to sweep away stagnation and malaria; the wind is

blowing, if only you will let it freshen your atmosphere and fill your sails."

The Appeal.

There is no part of the conduct of the revival service upon which so much depends as upon the public appeal. It is here men are greatest successes or greatest failures; for here, as nowhere else, the real evangelistic gift is evidenced. The exhorter who followed the preacher in the old-time Methodist service was the man upon whom its fruitage most depended. In many, this gift was cultivated to an unusual degree, and men became experts in moving the people after a thoughtful, earnest Gospel sermon. There are more evangelists who fail by lack of power and genius in this than elsewhere, and more pastors who, feeling the lack of these gifts, declare they can not do evangelistic work. I have heard many strong pastors say, who were able to preach with great effectiveness, that they would give almost anything to be able to apply the sermon and direct the people to immediate action; but they have felt themselves helpless in such a situation. Is there anything more paralyzing than when, at the close of a sermon, an attempt is made to move the people by an appeal which lacks power, and which is void of the genius

of wise and successful direction? Nothing will put a greater damper on the meeting, not only for the time being, but sometimes indefinitely, than to have an appeal fail in its attempt to move people. Every man who would succeed in this respect should make a most careful study of how to bring his sermon to such a conclusion as will make it possible for him to enforce it, and also to direct action so as not to fail of immediate response. Better make no attempt in the face of a large audience to get public committal, unless there be some assurance of favorable response.

The appeal must be in the expression of the heroic, self-denying spirit of the real rescuer who risks his life for those who are in peril. An appeal is useless if we can not make men feel by our very expression that we are possessed enough of the heroic, not simply to stand on the shore and shout "danger," "this way," or even to throw out the life-line; our manner must be characterized by something deeper than this,—a spirit of consecration, a willingness to stem the tide or risk the waves to rescue the perishing. In the great Chicago theater disaster, one officer is said to have at least fifty lives to his credit. Soon after the

blaze began he placed himself on the platform of the rear fire-escape, and there for hours he worked, helping panic-stricken fugitives across the perilous ladder bridge reaching from the platform to the nearest building,—a splendid example of that kind of heroism that should characterize the evangelistic rescuer.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVANGELISTIC MESSAGE.

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CHAPTER III.

THE EVANGELISTIC MESSAGE.

Possibly quite as much of the failure of the evangelistic movement of the last two decades has been due to a misplaced emphasis as to any other single thing. During this time the Churches most committed to evangelism have been given to emphasizing the method rather than the message. Indeed, it has been a period which has greatly neglected the function of preaching. The great denominations have emphasized, through the office of their leaders and their press, the function of pastoral visitation and the management of Churches, almost to the exclusion of the office of the pulpit. Hence, young men of evangelistic gifts have, in altogether too many instances, given their attention to the newest method of conducting services. They have spent an undue proportion of their time in what they have termed pastoral visitation; trusting to the machinery of their method, with little attention to the necessity of a strong

message from God's Word, which He has promised shall not return unto Him void; and all of this in an age of increasing intelligence, which would seem to demand greater pulpit effort than any previous time.

In conversation with a very successful pastor, who has never failed to bring men into his Church every year directly from the ranks of the world by conversion, he said: "People do not attach enough value to attendance upon Church service. I find," said he, "that nearly all our conversions are from those who have been for years more or less regular in attendance upon the preaching of the Word, and had doubtless become more influenced by it than we were aware." We do not discount pastoral work, and certainly not the power of personal contact, nor indeed reasonable consideration of methods; but the Gospel, and the Gospel preached, has been, and will be, "the power of God unto salvation," if we give it a reasonable chance. Therefore, in time of evangelistic effort, more importance must be attached to the power of preaching; for we observe that the great revivals of abiding character were born far more of the message than of the method; and much of the instability of modern

revivals is due to the disproportionate emphasis upon method rather than message.

A Message Commands Attention. Can the preaching of the Gospel command the thoughtful world of to-day on the one hand, and can it be preached with sufficient attractiveness to gain the attention and hold the interest of the larger world of the masses with their common impulses? Here and there are preachers whose churches are filled; but to one of these there are probably five, if not ten, who preach once a day, and many twice, to churches whose capacity is not half filled; and in larger communities and cities it is not because these churches are too large to accommodate the people who ought to be reached by the Gospel. Many people, and some preachers, have become so accustomed to this as to be apparently little concerned about it; and others grieve over it with no result. Is not the pulpit itself largely responsible for the extent to which this condition obtains; namely, that the people approve and sometimes demand performance instead of preaching? Has it not lowered itself and lost its hold as such by yielding to the superficial, if not the baser tastes? The church is not a theater, nor the pulpit a stage; as such they are both dismal

failures. To the pulpit the world looks for a man with a message. Our contention is, that the preacher of the Gospel who has a message from God, fresh, warm, up-to-date, dealing with the people's needs, vivacious with the dynamics of an intense personality, will be heard. A man with a message has never failed to get the ear of the world. Sometimes he has been only a John the Baptist out of the wilderness; sometimes a polished Brooks, or an impassioned and masterly Beecher; while in the same or closely allied ages, a plain but pungent Spurgeon, or an almost crude but captivating Moody. A man may have character, brains, gifts, and graces with which to adorn any pulpit, and yet be without a message. A message must have in it two chief notes: The prophetic note, that comes from the exalted plane of vision from which the prophet observes the state of affairs, the trend of human life, and its peril; not a vision of the world as some day long since gone by, but of his own immediate age, upon which he looks as God's watchman from the tower. Then from another Mount of Vision, not glaring with the light of Sinai, nor smoking with that of Carmel, but bathed with the tears and sobs of Calvary, he must

proclaim to the world the "glad tidings of great joy: Peace on earth, good will to men," through the unspeakable gift of God's matchless love; and both of these notes, that of the prophet and of the priest, must burn with a passion all consuming, that will make men feel the supreme urgency of the appeal.

What Shall We Preach?

The earnest pastor who is anxious about getting people interested in his message, that he may reach them with saving truth, is often confronted in time of evangelistic effort by the question, "What shall I preach?" Let us state first, briefly, what not to preach, and how not to preach.

First, do not preach an apologetic or defensive gospel. There are times and places for defending the faith, but such preaching should be done in regular services, as evangelists have not time to settle the questions raised by such procedure; and, moreover, the times do not demand it to any great degree. The thinking people are likely to believe that you live in another age, and will be prejudiced against your message, believing that the great fundamentals of Christianity are settled and accepted, and that the non-essentials are not worthy the attention of a man who pretends to be on the

urgent errand of the King's business, proclaiming to dying men the way of life and salvation.

The preacher of to-day, and especially the evangelistic preacher, ought to consider the changed mind of the world. Every preacher and evangelist should take into consideration that he lives in another thought-world. The environment of life is not what it formerly was; and in this environment men must be dealt with.

There are some forms of thought a man need never take seriously into consideration as a preacher. For example, it is useless for a man to waste his time antagonizing Ingersollism; for Ingersollism is as dead, for the most part, as Ingersoll. Men are not held in the grip of an atheistic philosophy; not theoretical but practical atheism grips the life of the world to-day. It is absurd to fail to recognize this changed mind; for there is a sense in which "we must get men to accept a true philosophy before we can preach the gospel to them. We have to take men as we find them; we have to preach the Gospel to the mind that is around us. If the mind is rooted in a view of the world which leaves no room for Christ and His work as Christian experience has realized them, then

that view of the world must be appreciated by the evangelist and undermined at its weak places. The attempt must be made to liberate the mind so that it may be open to the impression of realities, which, under the conditions imposed, it could only encounter with instinctive antipathy."

The whole method of teaching in school and college has changed. We do not provide text-books to-day with questions to be solved, and drive the scholars up to the post and hitch them there until they have solved them. We bring the boy or girl face to face with problems in such a manner that they will ask the questions; and a question that a boy is interested enough in to ask, is sure to incite him to attempt to find the answer. The compelling method is not considered any longer a successful educational method; nor does it succeed any better in religion than education. Study to find the most open avenue to a man's mind, but do not try to force yourself through a sternly barred door.

The evangelistic message should, as far as possible, avoid the controversial. A minister may sometimes advertise himself and his services temporarily by entering into the discussion of controversial topics, but he is not likely to

accomplish any direct evangelistic end by this method; for if there are those opposed to his views he is much more likely to stir feelings antagonistic, and widen the distance between himself and his hearers, and those who are not thus interested are likely to feel that such a time is not well suited to the discussion of such questions, and his message fails to persuade. There are some evangelists who seem to be unable to introduce a revival campaign except upon the ground of combating some attitude of mind which they feel obtains in the congregation or community. They even go so far as to discount morality in order to emphasize evangelism. I recall an instance of this in the community where I lived when a boy. The Churches represented were Methodist, Baptist, and Universalist. The latter had not a large, but an eminently respectable following. Preachers of the evangelical Churches seemed to feel that whenever any aggressive movements of evangelism were instituted, the first thing necessary was to make an attack upon the Universalist position. In order to do this they frequently did their best to belittle moral life and character outside the Christian Church. They emphasized morality as filthy rags, and

berated those who gave themselves the slightest credit for its possession. They invariably overlooked that fundamental thought illustrated in the attitude of the Master as He stood in the presence of the almost perfect young man of whom He said there was but one thing lacking.

If necessary to attempt the undermining work in preaching, do not attack the strong but the weak points in a man's position. The Japanese army had driven their men like sheep to the slaughter in their attempts to capture Port Arthur, and the war was indefinitely and cruelly prolonged by the invulnerable condition of the fortification. They could do nothing better; for there seemed to be no weak point in the Russian stronghold; but the average man is not so fortified. The positions taken are usually poorly defended, a mere temporary refuge as an excuse from present duty. If a preacher selects the strongest points to attack, he may be held at bay indefinitely; for the position will doubtless be one about which will be rallied all defensive forces, the stubbornness of half truths, hereditary bias, and personal pride; but if he attacks the weak points, by the wise process of indirection, he may speedily cause the man to feel the insecurity of his positions,

and his common sense will lead him to flee to a safe foundation.

Preach the Gospel. Not About It.

We think it is fair to say, and is not likely to be contradicted, that a majority of the professional evangelists of the last quarter of a century have been the most decidedly dogmatic preachers in the pulpit; and this too in the face of the fact that these men, for the most part, have been without theological training, or even Biblical instruction that would warrant them in assuming decided opinions on great controversial doctrines. I have frequently heard these men arraign the preachers generally for not preaching the Gospel, and then go on night after night promulgating their opinions, and denouncing those who did not hold them, and scarcely preach a simple, straightforward Gospel sermon in a whole week.

The most intelligent people of to-day have little care, hardly respect, for a man who preaches a set of ideas and opinions on such occasions. They do not want to hear addresses on theology, any more than addresses on philosophy. They do not want lectures about the Gospel any more than a hungry man wants to hear lectures on pure food. The people are hungry; they want to be fed. If the Gospel

pulpit has lost its authority, it is to no little degree attributable to the fact of so much preaching about the Gospel. The moment we begin, in these days of freedom of thought, to theorize, dogmatize, or speculate, every man who believes in religious tolerance feels he has a right to put his opinions over against ours, and our message to him has lost its authority. We have spent too much time, and sometimes lost our way, trying to make the people see Divine things as we see them, rather than pointing them to Him who said, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father;" for whether we are aware of it or not, the people still want to "see Jesus."

"The recent theological discussion has not affected the relation of the masses to the Church, so much as it has affected the relation of the Church, and especially the theologians, to the masses. The common people, the lower classes, are deeply interested in bread, but know little and care less about scientific dietetics. The Gospel as preached by Jesus of Nazareth is still acceptable to the common people."

Preach Positive Truths.

Far better is it in almost every instance not to preach negatives, not to deny or denounce, but to declare and an-

nounce. "The evangel is not denunciatory of sin; it is not pronunciatory of punishment; it is annunciatory of salvation." The world needs only to be convinced that there is a better way; that instead of husks, there is bread; instead of a barren desert, a land of milk and honey. Altogether too much time is spent by many evangelists in trying to convince of self-evident and self-conscious facts concerning sin. Not that these need to be overlooked, much less compromised, but taken for granted. What men are anxious to know is that "the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin;" that the Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world, and "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." In other words, the people are famishing, perishing for the bread of life, and the preacher should make it his supreme study so to set it before them that they will receive it and live.

Preach Fundamentals.

The method of the past has been from particulars to fundamentals. The method of the future must be from fundamentals to particulars. An immense amount of time and energy has been spent in discussing to promiscuous congregations, often to their confusion or disgust, the fine doctrinal points

of Christianity, to which, if you succeed in committing a man, you have not gained much; for a part of Christianity can never be equal to the whole; and some of the hardest tasks we have, are to get people thus committed, to see that they have only become possessed of some single aspect of Christianity, and not Christianity itself.

Preach Christ Crucified.

"I was born in a Christian family, and was strangely and wonderfully delivered from many of the more vulgar methods of sin, and I want to say to you, in all honesty and sincerity, I never trembled when I heard the law of Moses; but when I came into the presence of the radiant holiness of Christ, then I said, if that is what I ought to be, O how I have sinned!"

It is not necessary to compromise sin, nor fail to recognize its terrible meaning; but its meaning would better be magnified as evidenced here and now, instead of passing by these most tangible evidences, to the promised consequences of the hereafter. But, after all, the great evangelistic message is that of the cross, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." A sinner melted by the love of Jesus Christ from the cross, is much more

susceptible to molding by grace than is the sinner moved by fear of the perils of unalterable law. The old appeals to future torments do not take hold as does the appeal to the best. "They can not long be frightened by lurid word-pictures of the fiery torments, the intolerable tortures of the damned, such as our forefathers painted for their terrified hearers; but their moral sense healthily responds to a plain, earnest, honest declaration of the certain and terrible sequence of sin and suffering, such as is being so generally recognized by the masters of modern literature, but neglected—shall I say, almost criminally neglected?—by the pulpit, where the danger signals should never be lowered, but where the dark and awful reality can be relieved by heavenly flash-lights of the pitying compassion and forgiving love of the Father through the Eternal Son,"—"before the world's foundation slain." The Gospel of the cross is the only Gospel that saves. Whatever else a man drops out of his preaching as an evangelist, he must never turn aside from the cross, nor ever trifle with it. Men may make light of "hiding beneath the blood" and of the "crudeness of a Gospel of Calvary," but no

man has ever succeeded in doing the work of a real evangelist to the lost sons of God, without a message characterized by an appeal to men from the vision of Him who "was bruised for our iniquities." It may be to some foolishness and to others a stumbling block, but to those who will be fishers of men, it must be without a question "the power of God unto salvation."

A Message of Authority. The Gospel message must not lack the ring of authority. People want to hear a man who has something to say that he believes, and his confidence in his message must be the result of clinging to such truths as exclude controversy, hesitancy, and doubt. A message that falters or hesitates, requires apology, excuse, or modification, is not suited to the persuading of men to immediate decision for the Christian life. We think it will not be misunderstood if we remark that the character of the preaching for the past quarter of a century has failed to be persuasive in a large degree, because it was, with some, an attempt to present phases of truth that were being so disturbed that the preacher himself was not able to preach them with the sense of authority that

is the result of a profound conviction unmoved by questions of theology. A man unsettled in his own views upon a fundamental doctrine can never preach it so that it will be received by others. And his authority must also have something more than the conviction of the man; it must be buttressed by truth. An evangelist may be ever so earnest and impassioned, but if there is with the intelligent people a feeling that his appeal is on the basis "of an unscholarly dogmatism rather than a genuine truth-seeking," he will not gain their confidence, much less be able to convince them. The man who is to make men feel that his message has claims must, above all, be honest in his use of Scripture, and true to all light. A man is more likely to usher in a revival of religion by preaching truth in the light of modern interpretations, even though branded as heresy, than in preaching ideas and doctrines to which the Church ties, if the Church has not recognized the light, but demands statement of positions in which the preacher has not unqualified confidence. The evangelist who boldly declares, "I have long since ceased to preach to the mind of my hearers; I make my appeal to the will,"

lacks sanity. Such a man can but speedily lose the respect of his audience.

Believe In Your Message. We can not appeal effectively unless we believe in our message. One of the marked characteristics of the preaching of the great revivals of history was, that those who preached, believed in their sermons, and expected men to believe and be saved. They did not always exact expressions, so as to count the people; they permitted God to do His own book-keeping; but they preached to save men. We often preach perfunctorily, because we have to preach. This is the misfortune of that kind of evangelism that brings a man to preach to-night, and another to-morrow night, neither in the spirit of the service nor with a message born for the occasion. Thus the sermon is a mere filling of time, and the exhorter has to preach another sermon or depend upon the power of the arousements or the mechanism of his after-service. The sermon is discounted; it was never suited; nothing was aimed at; nothing expected. The message must be prepared for the occasion, and believed in when preached. That oft-advanced idea, "the immanence of God," is one of the best gifts of faith

in modern times; it simply needs a new translation or interpretation. There is a genuine Divine immanence, not a vague indefinite "power that makes for righteousness;" it is the immanence of God the Spirit, given, as Christ declared, for human expediency—("It is expedient that I go away")—who takes of the things that are Christ's and makes them clear to men; who makes God immanent through a living Christ. This Christ, the preacher must expect to find in every dark place corresponding to his message.

"I have never been in a place so dark that I did not find Christ there. I have told some of the people about the work which God has helped me to do in my own Church in London. On the last day of the old year, a year ago, I went down to a house where there were some seventy fallen women, to take three of their number away to a new life; and as I left that house with those three poor creatures, the other inhabitants of the house lined up the passageway and prayed for them as they passed. They said things like this: 'Be good; O you have got such a chance; we wish we had it! Can not you take us away too, sir, and give us a chance?' And the poor souls wished me 'a

Happy New Year' as I went out into the dark street. Was not Christ there? A dark place, and the doors were shut, yet Christ got there. There is no place so dark but that Jesus can make light."

Yours a Consistent Message.

One of the supreme advantages given to the evangelistic preacher of to-day is, that he does not have to apologize, explain, or reconcile theories of redemption with facts of Scripture and nature. If the sermons of some of the great evangelists of former times, like Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," seem crude to you, remember they had to appeal to something beside reason, and indeed almost to discard reason; tied to a theology that, though it might shock the finest sensibilities and bar every process of reason, must not be compromised. "The great revivalists of the Middle Ages had to get men to do many things besides repenting of their sins and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Later, in most of the countries of the Reformation, evangelists had to tell each unconverted man that the question of his salvation or damnation was unalterably fixed by the all-predestinating God before the foundations of the world were laid. Edwards was a great revivalist, but he

had to entreat sinners to use a freedom, the existence of which his theology strenuously denied. The Oberlin revivalists used to ask the unconverted to do by 'natural ability' what they admitted was morally impossible. It was the best those preachers could do." "Your predecessors have had to tell men that they were stone-deaf, yet under obligation to act; that they were dead, yet under obligation to exhibit the activities of the highest life."

"The crowning beauty and glory of your opportunity is that to you, more fully than to any class of evangelical preachers that ever went before you, is definitely and explicitly committed the Gospel of the Prodigal Son."

Message Must Be Impassioned. Nothing is more hopeless in an evangelistic message than the lack of passion. In no place is a preacher more helpless than when endeavoring to present a messag to persuade men to decide the great question, and to act upon their conviction to enter a Christian life, than when his message lacks the moving power of an impassioned appeal. "It did not create any throb in the soul of the listener," is the feeling that one sometimes has, as he listens to a good, faithful presentation of truth, void of that peculiar element

that has made great orators and great preachers capable of lifting their hearers out of the spell of apathy, and sweeping them along to the point of decision, and past into the kingdom.

This passion is neither noise nor exhibition of physical energy—although a voice and a manner may be so quiet as to paralyze—but rather is it an enkindling of life, an exhibition of spirit that throbs in the voice, beams on the face, and flashes in the eye. Such passion is due to many elements:

A good physical make-up is a great quality. Is it not clear that many men are barred from success in the pulpit, especially as evangelists, because they have not the most essential qualities in a preacher's nature? A fine physique is a priceless heritage to a preacher; but even the lack of that can be overcome by qualities of courage exhibited through a nervous temperament that one can control, yet always rally on the spot. A man without keen nerves that brace his eyes wide open after an earnest effort in a Gospel service, making sleep nearly impossible, is without a great requisite to successful pulpit and evangelistic effort. And natural sympathy, that warms and melts under the influence of his passion, is absolutely necessary

to reach the best that is in men through that outer crust that so often encases their lives.

Passion Kindled By Vision. And, finally, a certain frame of mind, born of reflection, meditation, and study, that causes to sweep before one's vision that which influences the whole inner man, and makes it intense with desire and radiant with hope, is necessary to an impassioned appeal. A man who can not and does not use to a high degree the great faculty of the imagination is void of a great essential to evangelistic preaching. As evangelists we have cared too little for a thoughtful, reflective preparation for the message to be delivered. We rush thoughtlessly into the pulpit, depend too much upon the spur of the moment, break connection with our vision as we have gained it from reflection, by the informality of attention to many very minor matters of the Church services. The old preachers of power had this advantage: they believed in the message prepared, and considered other matters unimportant when inflamed with their message.

The evangelistic preacher whose vision sweeps out upon a helpless world must be able to turn from that vision up to a loving God, and thence down to a manger cradle, on through

the gray mists and gathering darkness of Gethsemane, up the cruel hill of Calvary to the ugly tree with its jagged nails and the view of the thorn-crowned brow; and under the inspiration of such a vision must the real messenger of the good tidings go forth, if he wants to get the ear of this old world, that he may tell with saving effect how "God so loved the world."

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVANGELISTIC PASTOR.

1. Evangelical Means Evangelistic.
2. Not After a Fixed Pattern.
3. A Revival without an Evangelist Possible.
4. An Evangelistic Pastorate Most Permanently Strong.
5. The Only Satisfying Ministry.
6. Evangelism Needs Able Pastoral Leadership.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVANGELISTIC PASTOR.

It is time "to rescue evangelism from the low estate into which it has fallen, conducted wholly or chiefly as it has been by strangers *in transitu,* who open sores that they leave unhealed, and who are indifferent to the result of their lightning charges. Strong Christians and great preachers, charged with the sublimity and simplicity of the Gospel, can do greater work than the ephemeral evangelist, who, swallow-like, is here to-day and gone to-morrow." This is said not in disparagement of good evangelists, but of the misfortune that has befallen the whole evangelistic movement, which depends so fully upon these men who often take the work out of the hands of the one man who must be responsible for its genuineness and permanency. It is not because the evangelist does not always do good, thorough work, but his hand is not on the people long enough to mold and establish; and pastors find it difficult

to transfer the life from the influence of the evangelist to that of the pastor. To this is added the unfortunate impression in a community, of a preacher ostensibly set for the saving of the people, who must invite a professional man to do what is in all consistency his supreme work. And further still, this whole movement tends to lift the pastor out of the sphere of his work, until, in some instances, pastors have come to take pride in the fact that they are not evangelistic; leaving the impression that this is an inferior kind of work, that belongs more to the enthusiastic and less cultured men of "Salvation Army" type.

Serious reflection will disclose to any earnest minister that this is all wrong, and must speedily be corrected, else the whole life of the Church will be imperiled. Our contention is, that the reform must begin by restoring to the evangelical Church the evangelistic pastor.

Evangelical Means Evangelistic.

Scarcely a minister in any one of our great orthodox denominations would allow himself to be charged as unevangelical, and yet he makes no contention that he is evangelistic. Ought there to be any such discrimination between evangelical and evangelistic? Evangelical means something more

than orthodox; it carries with it the idea of faith in a supernatural Gospel, a Gospel that has immediate saving power in it, and is supposed to be preached for that purpose. Is it not the business of every preacher of evangelical doctrines to see to it that his message is received, and the people saved by it? Of what use is it to boast of orthodoxy and evangelicalism if we do not, with Paul, find "the Gospel the power of God unto salvation?" The true evangelical preacher preaches, not as a profession, but by the imperative "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel;" and a man with such a call to the ministry, with such a constant impelling power, can be content with nothing less than some direct evidence of the fruitfulness of his mission. The only satisfaction of an evangelical ministry is when it becomes an evangelizing ministry.

Not After a Fixed Pattern, but Stirring Best Gifts.

One thing which has limited pastoral evangelism is the fixed standard of the work and the exact results that must follow. There has come to obtain a notion that certain peculiar characteristics must be possessed by the evangelist, and that he must pursue his work along fixed lines, and turn it out with a certain kind of stamp upon

it, however contrary this may be to his natural instincts. This is entirely foreign to the genius of Christianity. We are fully convinced that every preacher who is really called to the ministry can become efficient as an evangelist in his own way, if we do not bind upon him evangelistic traditions that are more than he can bear. When Jesus Christ chose twelve disciples He did not seek men of equal gifts, nor did He try to make them all of one mold. He did say to them all, "Come with Me, and I will make you fishers of men," and the characteristics of these men stand out clearly defined, each doing his work in his own way. It has ever been so. There is a large class of people who seem to be reached only by a man who has all the characteristics of the average evangelist; there is also another large class whom he can not reach, who will scarcely go to hear him, and, if they do, are not favorably impressed. Why not assume that some of the characteristics of men who have none of these qualities, if they would apply the gifts they do have in an evangelistic way, are just the men needed to reach that class untouched by the man of common evangelistic gifts?

Preachers may not agree altogether as to how

to conduct the revival, nor as to all its manifestations; but if they want it, and are determined to use their best judgment and largest gifts in a Christ-impassioned style, it will surely come. The best revivals are those that come not of great generalship and peculiar methods, but that spring from earnest, inquiring, burdened, consecrated lives; through natural rather than artificial channels. Such revivals are the result, not of human genius, but of the supreme leadership of the Divine Spirit. Coming thus, they abide; preparing their own way, and creating an atmosphere in which converts can live.

A Revival Without an Evangelist.

A revival without an evangelist must be looked upon as possible, and indeed essential, to the very life of the Church. It is not strange that in these days we have no more evangelistic pastors. Specializing this work by multiplying evangelists has largely displaced the pastor; there has been little demand for such work upon his part, and the gift has failed by lack of use. After reading an article from our pen in which we advocated "Pastoral Evangelism," a worthy and efficient evangelist sent us the following note: "I heartily agree with your plan in getting the Church and pastors to work; but you can honestly say

that half your preachers, or more, are failures as evangelists." We have yet to prove that this is true; but to whatever degree it may be true, we are obliged to affirm that is is due chiefly to the existence of, and reliance upon, the professional evangelist, who has led the people to believe that the average pastor can not do evangelistic work effectively. The Churches, as well as pastors, are responsible for this condition. Many of them do not want evangelistic work done. In conversation one day with a brilliant and prominent young preacher, I discovered a peculiar note of sadness in his voice as he said, "I would like to have revival meetings, but my people do not want them." Here is the millstone about the neck of many young, earnest, and gifted preachers. These men are called early into Churches that appreciate their ability, but immediately quench the evangelistic spirit because they are not in sympathy with such work.

We have had opportunity of observing the possibilities of revivals without evangelists, by a plan which for two years has been operated on the district which it is our privilege to superintend. The general plan—which may be of some interest—is briefly stated, thus: By

mutual agreement a pastor will go wherever sent, under our direction, for a period of ten days, to assist another pastor, and thus a complete evangelistic campaign is conducted for several months; reaching every Church, enlisting every pastor, and creating thus a unity of evangelistic spirit. Preparation is made for the meeting with the same degree of care as though a special evangelist were coming. Everything possible is done to assure confidence upon the part of the people in the success of the meetings under such leadership. They are given, however, to expect that there is to be nothing of peculiar or unusual order in the nature of the services. They are encouraged to believe that good, earnest, straightforward work will bring results. Not so much value is attached to the novelties of the evangelist, leaving chance for larger faith in God rather than in men and methods. Most excellent results have followed such services, without reaction. These pastors, by the confidence reposed in them, have applied themselves as evangelists, and a very large percentage have exhibited fine qualities of evangelism; in many instances, such as neither they nor their people believed they possessed. We are familiar with

a goodly number of very bright preachers—warm-hearted, tactful, soulful pastors—who have all the native powers for excellent evangelistic work, and simply need to be made to feel that this work is fundamental to the ministry. And we are sure there are men who, in their early ministry manifest fine gifts of this character, but who have allowed them to be paralyzed through the influence of the non-evangelistic Churches which they have served. There is nothing incompatible in splendid scholarship and evangelistic fervor; each adds to the force of the other, greatly enriching the pulpit; but for the paralyzing influence of these Churches, such men might have been, not only great preachers, but great evangelists as well.

An Evangelistic Ministry Most Permanently Strong.

When a young minister of good ability starts out on his career, he undoubtedly expects that when he commands a pulpit he will have no difficulty in getting a constant hearing, for people will be eager to get to his Church. He does not get far in his ministry before he discovers that he is faced by the same problem as that of his brethren, and that even his rare gifts are largely discounted, and people do not come to listen to his most brilliant efforts. This is

especially true of the second service of the Sabbath. Immediately he is tempted to announce a series of special sermons of the lecture order to which the people will give attention for the time; but even then he will be disappointed because of some who do not appear; and when the series is over, the crowd drops back to its original size. Then he makes another attempt and advertises a variety series; some with special musical features, stereopticon pictures, etc.; yet no real growth comes to his congregation. There are some extra visitors who spend a night with him, and some shifting sight-seers come to gratify an appetite for something new; and even if he succeeds in gathering a congregation, he does not build up a permanent constituency, much less a Church of loyal members. And although it may seem to be contrary to superficial observation, it is nevertheless true that while sinners do not like to be disturbed, and appear more to enjoy an entertaining ministry deeply, they have little respect for such, and the Church that stoops to compete with theater, lodge, or club, falls even in the estimate of the world. None of these innovations and attractions can be depended upon to build up permanently a Christian congregation, and

will, in most instances, eventually result in a boomerang to the preacher. We are convinced that more people want to hear the Gospel than anything else from the Christian pulpit. They can get all the other things served up in better fashion elsewhere; but the pulpit has a message for the souls of men as it bursts forth from the heart of the Gospel messenger, that can be had nowhere else, and people are disappointed when they go to the church where anything else displaces that message. The abiding quality of the ministry will be more and more determined by the preacher's ability to gain an earnest and continued following, build up a devoted, active Church, and a sympathetic, co-operative congregation, who come because the Church gives to them something they do not find elsewhere. Only as the Church is the temple of God, the repository of His truth, the channel of His power; only as it shall have kindled again and again that spiritual zeal, born of an intense evangelism, can she really commend herself to the world.

A friend of mine, only a few days since, related the following incident. He said: "We have in our congregation a goodly number of men from the business world, not Church mem-

bers or even professing Christians. In considering a plan for special evangelistic services, I decided to get the feeling of these men with respect to such work. I asked one of them, a regular attendant upon public services, and always ready to co-operate with anything of a general character, but who makes no profession of Christianity, what he and his class of people generally thought of evangelistic work. I said, 'Do you men look upon these as legitimate and essential features of Church activity, or do you view it with little consideration, and think it only a custom that prevails?' His answer surprised me. He said, 'We think this not only legitimate work, but the very work in which the Church should by all means be engaged.'" We are convinced that there is a mistaken notion that thoughtful people outside the Church do not believe in intelligent, consistent, and earnest evangelistic effort. We rather believe that they look with reproach upon any Church that professes to represent the mission of Jesus Christ in the world which does not make such work pre-eminent. Young men of promise in the ministry ought to reflect carefully upon this, and not in the slightest degree discount evangelism; for if signs are to be

trusted at all, the greatest Churches of to-morrow will want men who can make their preaching tell in reaching the people with saving power. "Stir up the gift that is in thee."

Only Satisfying Ministry.

It is our contention that, if conscientiously pursued, the ministry from the days of the apostles never has been a desirable calling for men of ability, as compared with other vocations, and it never can be. It still has too many crosses, too many messages people do not want to hear, and too many thankless tasks, if a man only looks upon it as an ordinary profession. The ministry is, above all other work, pursued for conscience' sake; and such work is full of pain and mortal disappointment. Bethlehem, Judea, Gethsemane, Calvary, are all the schools of the true prophet. Like his Master, every true minister must sit in humiliation as he passes through them. He must become poor, and find his reward only in enriching others. But if, like his Master, he can go to the cross, and, being lifted upon it, draw all men to himself, his ministry excels the glories combined in all earthly callings. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

I am sure that more than one preacher of

splendid ability has passed through the experience of which Dr. Dawson in his recent visit to this country so frankly tells with impressive effect, of the very radical change recently wrought in his own ministry in the direction of a more distinctively evangelistic note. "He narrated the story of the result which a Free Church Council meeting had upon him when it resolved itself into a midnight expedition to the slums of Brighton; how that led him to invite the evangelist, Gypsy Smith, to hold meetings in his own church, which, in turn, gave rise to a procession through the crowded section of London, headed by himself, his deacons, and two Salvation Army bands; and which gathered in devotees of the saloons and dance halls, and brought them back to the church for a midnight service. When he stood up to give out 'Rescue the Perishing,' and heard those people from the slums, who probably had learned the hymn in some Sunday-school in their childhood, take it up, and sing it with much feeling, he was 'stirred to the heart' as never before. At the close of the meeting several hundred manifested a determined purpose to reform and begin a Christian life. Since then the temper of his Church and the nature of his ministry

have been distinctively evangelistic. 'I came to see,' he said, 'that it was not worth while being a minister unless I could get the old Wesleyan evangelistic note into my ministry. It is so easy, you know, to lapse into comfortable ways and lose the old appeal of the Gospel.' The outcome has been the restoration of the note of reality and a keen joy and interest in the ministry, which some time ago he was seriously disposed to give up for literary work."

From this example every bright, earnest young preacher should learn as early as possible the lesson so important. For a ministry void of the soul-satisfying reward that comes of bringing men into the kingdom of God can never find anything that will keep it above the lucrative and preferment ideals, that take the very heart out of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Evangelism Needs Able Leaders.

It is not desirable, from the evangelistic standpoint, to make distinction between ministers of various attainments and gifts, and we greatly dislike so to discriminate; but it becomes necessary sometimes in order to be understood, or for emphasis. We shall always have men of humble gifts and lesser attainment, and we shall probably always need them. Their work is not to be discounted,

but their influence must be limited largely to their immediate field of service. They can not be, and ought not to be, leaders; they are not capable of molding the thought and guiding the movements of the Church at large. The reason why so many prominent ministers and intelligent laymen have not been identified with evangelism, but have, in recent years, stood aloof from it, is due not a little to the class of men who have been emphasizing it; and the kind of emphasis which such men were sure to give. Evangelism came principally into the control of men of small gifts and limited attainments, and thus not only lost its appeal to the stronger minds, but lost its virtue in a large degree for lack of broad, intelligent, well-balanced leaders. The majority of these more prominent men in the pulpits of the land had not abandoned the general principle of evangelism, nor by any means had they surrendered the conviction of its necessity, but they had ceased to associate themselves with evangelistic activities because they could not assent to the prevailing thought, nor the generally adopted methods; many of them became so prejudiced that they appeared to be against evangelism itself, while their intention was only toward what they

thought to be a crude and almost vulgar misrepresentation. Such was their attitude that those in control of evangelistic interests were able to make stock of their position, by means of which a wide gulf was fixed between evangelism and a very large class of cultured and important Church leaders. As a result, there obtained the feeling so widespread that evangelism and culture were incompatible.

We are now on the eve of another evangelistic awakening; and of a movement to be more widespread, and having in it qualities more abiding, because it is not only approved by, but even emanates from, many most cultured, intelligent, and otherwise influential sources, so far as human agencies are concerned. We must, however, consider how great a responsibility rests upon the Church in the very initiative stages of this movement, to secure to it early the best possible leadership, and to save it from the peril of falling into the hands of narrow and incapable leaders, and thus lose to it its largest usefulness and most abiding characteristics. To the reguarly ordained ministry, through its representative men in the pulpit, we must look for this leadership; we can not expect to find it elsewhere. It is, therefore, the

supreme duty of every intelligent and influential minister of the evangelical Churches of the Christian world to set aside his prejudices, arouse himself from his indifference, and give himself with his best powers to this great movement, and so direct and temper it as to conserve it permanently; for unless this is done we are practically assured of having a repetition of the past. Let the men who are capable of leadership refuse to take up the work of shaping and directing, and it is bound to drift into the hands of incapable leaders, and the splendid opportunity of the hour will be lost. Even most conservative men as to evangelistic methods are needed, as in all other great world movements, to modify the extremist, and help to strike the happy medium of a permanent evangelism throughout all the Church; hence the urgency of this idea of an evangelistic pastorate, that the Church may have in the movement those important saving factors so essential to secure the largest and most permanent results.

CHAPTER V.

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH.

1. Evangelism must not be Detached from the Church.
2. Evangelism must be the Aim of the Church.
3. The Source of Life and Rejuvenation.
4. Reached by Conserving and Intensifying Normal Agencies.
    (1) The Sunday Evening Service.
    (2) The Prayer-meeting and Evangelism.
    (3) Pastors and Prayer-meetings.
    (4) The Sunday-school and Evangelism.
    (5) The Young People's Societies.
5. Evangelism thus becomes Constructive and Aggressive.
6. Continuous Evangelism Defined.
7. Practical Consecration the Cost.

CHAPTER V.

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH.

THERE are many evidences of a desire upon the part of the Christian world for a permanent basis of activity. There is, beyond doubt, a quite universal feeling that Christianity as a religion, and as *the* religion, has now passed all experimental stages; and that what is needed is not further defense of faith, but direct application of principles. The question is no longer, "Art Thou the Christ, or shall we look for another?" The world is apparently satisfied with Him and His principles. The question to-day is: Are the principles capable of application? Is there enough living inspiration in the Gospel to draw men, and power enough in it to save them; and what shall be the method by which we shall administer the kingdom of Jesus Christ? These are the burning questions of the Church of to-day; and from the evangelistic standpoint these questions are vital; for as evangelical Christians we still hold that these

principles have a deeper application than that of a mere outward reformation. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" but the saving virtue of that name is not merely by consent to a new ideal, nor submission to a lofty sentiment, but because it brings men in touch with a new life-power. Men by it are not simply raised to a new realm of thought, but of being; they do not merely undergo a change of mind, but a change of heart; their birth is not from within, but from above; they have not only determined for themselves to lead a new life, but a new life has come to possess them; they are new creatures; old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

The problem is not any longer how to get men to believe in the converting and leavening power, but how shall we get the leaven in operation forcibly, comprehensively, and continuously. It is no longer a question of how to get a foothold or establish a fortress in a new region, but how to bring the empire into subjection; no longer how shall we be able to get the tree rooted in the new soil, but how shall we grow it sufficiently to have leaves enough to heal the nations; no longer the question of

proving the virtue of the leaven, but of finding the means of getting it in touch with the vast lump of humanity, and making each new particle a medium of transmutation to others, until the whole shall be leavened. The Church has studied this question long enough to be satisfied that we are past the experimental stages of operation also, and must settle down to a universal method of evangelism; or, in other words, we are convinced that we have reached a point where we ought to be able to apprehend what is to be the ultimate evangelism; for we shall have no continuous evangelism until we discover and adhere to the plan which is to be final in the Church of Christ. Until then evangelism will continue to be periodical.

The ultimate evangelism will be that of an evangelistic Church. This evangelistic Church will not be reached by the possession of this spirit, by factions of the Church, nor by a prevailing sentiment that insists upon periodical efforts, but evangelism as the dominant note of the Church, pervading all its spirit, and foremost in its plans; not an evangelism that inaugurates campaigns and goes about its work after a fashion that makes it special, and thus weakens it, but that aims for evangelistic results as

though they were commonplace features, and the normal element of the Church.

One thing that has greatly discredited evangelism, quite as much as the professionalism of its leaders, is the specialization of its forces detached from the Church. For this condition both parties have been responsible; the one not only because it believed in evangelism, but insisted upon it by demanding particular methods and expressions often in a spirit of intolerance toward the rest of the Church; the other, usually more influential, possibly not spiritual, and surely not evangelistic, had frozen out those of this temperamental make-up; and as the result of this, evangelism has come to mean movements independent and unauthorized, and thus to many people has become unsavory and unpopular. "Unattached and unauthorized evangelism, even by individual members of the Church of Christ, is, to say the least, unwise, and not the most fruitful of permanent results. I do not desire to criticise unkindly any movement that acts independently of the Churches, although I do not hesitate to say that I have grave suspicion of everything that boasts that it is undenominational. I have a very great love for everything that is *interdenominational,*

which is quite another matter. But all unattached, freelance work, unauthorized and ungoverned by the Church, is not the best work possible and tends to disorder and confusion."

But if the Church of the future is to save to itself a genuine evangelism, and deliver itself from discredit, it must make place for such people as detach themselves, by being sufficiently evangelistic in its controlling constituency to be able to conserve these people and their efforts; gradually molding and tempering them into a better evangelistic spirit; for they, too, possess elements that help to keep, by their enkindling nature, the more retiring alive to evangelistic effort. The evangelistic standard of the Church of the future must be with more breadth. It must make place for all classes of thought and temper. The universal adaptability of the Gospel is one of the greatest fundamentals of evangelism. The Church that is to be evangelistic must be cosmopolitan in spirit and life. We must have types of thought and temper in the Church to correspond with the types of thought and temper to be reached by the Church. There will be need of making place for an impulsive Peter, the inquiring though skeptical Thomas, and the stubborn, in-

tellectual, giant-like Paul; for we have to reach the men with common impulsive nature, who are most easily touched by the enthusiasm and warmth of the Christian spirit; we have to answer with positive challenge the cool but earnest and inquiring mind, and we must not ignore the fact that it pays to be patient and meet as far as possible, upon his level, the man who is slow to see the supremacy of Jesus. Only thus can we become "all things to all men." Peter exclaiming, "We believe Thou art the Christ," with his impulsive nature, furnishes the fervor of leadership; Thomas confessing "My Lord and my God," becomes a substantial answer to doubt and a fortress for faith; and Paul bowing before his Master, and eagerly inquiring, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" is the man who will help to turn the world upside-down.

The Aim of the Church.

The Church that takes exception to, or depreciates, evangelism, disregards the very thing for which the Church was organized. It is not necessary to cite instances, but simply to suggest that, without the subtle and overmastering power of evangelism, the Church could never have been credited with leadership in the great reforms of history;

could never have established in all points of the world the missionary movements which have laid the foundation for world civilization. And in spite of the reflection that is sometimes cast by non-evangelistic Churches on the nature of this work, it may be affirmed, without fear of contradiction, that the Churches which have ignored this principle have scarcely made any impress upon the irreligious world. Where are the unbelievers whom they have changed to men of faith? And where are the sinners that have been committed to a better life?

There is evidence sufficient that the Church that does not apply these principles makes very little inroad upon sin, or deep impression upon the community, and fails to gather directly from the world many people into its membership. A study of the actual membership of non-evangelistic Churches will reveal, to an amazing degree, the fact that nearly all their increase comes from the families of Christian people; in many instances, by the mere formal assent to the creeds; or in large cities, by letter from other Churches, or by the reinstatement of those who once were converted through evangelistic efforts; and that, apart from revivals, only a very small number of those who

join the orthodox Christian Churches come from the ranks of the world.

An organ of one of our leading Churches, not especially noted for evangelism, has well said: "The truth is, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. The Church was organized to do this work for Him. About every plan has been tried. Churches have reduced their creeds, and yet have not found the people thronging their doors. Men are not in sympathy with the Church until they are in accord with Christ." The world will not be saved by trying to get the creeds of the Church down where unbelieving men can assent to them. Our Unitarian and Universalist friends are all the time talking about how the evangelicals are continually coming to their views; but if we are, it is a doubtful compliment to our position and mission in the Christian world, when they themselves are obliged to admit that they are losing ground as Churches all the while. Only as the Church is committed to a definite evangelistic aim can she accomplish her mission of seeking and saving the lost.

If an organized Christianity is essential to the advancement of the kingdom and Church life, fellowship, and activity are the best

modes of operation, then there must be some means of rejuvenation by which to perpetuate the life of the Church. The Church for some time past has been swinging away from extreme emphasis upon what Christ has done for us, to a larger emphasis upon what we must do for ourselves. In other words, evangelicalism and morality have been too widely separated; and in the process of this very essential reform the danger is, that we shall swing so far to the other extreme as to make the Church only an institution of ethical ideals, by emphasis upon morality and disregard for spirituality. The Christian Church as an organization is supreme in its lofty moral standard; but here it parts company with all merely ethical institutions, because it possesses a spiritual life, not of sentiment and enthusiasm, but of a genuine sense of God in the soul and a religious fervor born of that blessed consciousness. Rob the Church of this, and you rob it of its self-perpetuating power. This spirituality can not be had by talking about it, but by doing the things which cultivate it; the unselfish things that lift one's life out of the realm of the sordid and materialistic by keeping it close in touch with the spirit

The Source of Life and Rejuvenation.

and mission of the Master. The vision of God is gained by being face to face with Him who declared the Father; and companionship with Him is found in the life of redemptive service. The Church can not be possessed of genuine spirituality if it does not carry upon its heart the burden of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

There are Churches that lament the lack of growth, though well equipped and auspiciously located; about the only rejoicing they have is in letters gathered from other Churches, which means nothing for the advancement of the kingdom. They forget that unless they learn to grow otherwise, to-morrow their ranks will be depleted by an equal exit. We are familiar with Churches of this character that for years, by virtue of their situation, have taken five members by letter for every one thus dismissed, and yet their congregations have not increased in the slightest, and their prayer-meetings in attendance and interest are unchanged. We are acquainted with facts concerning more than one city where the Churches of a single great denomination have scarcely more than held their own; and, but for those who have come from rural districts and other cities, would by

no means have sustained their membership; and this in cities of rapidly growing population. This is unquestionably due to the fact that, for ten years at least, there has been no general evangelistic movement in these cities, and no great and genuine revival in any single Church. Our great and influential Churches must be made to see that neither ability in the pulpit, nor intelligence, social prestige, or financial representation in the pew, can permanently save the Church from a collapse through spiritual decline; unless emphasis is placed upon the evangelizing mission of the Church, we shall dry up the very fountains of Christian growth, and paralyze the sources of spiritual energy.

This is not only important from the standpoint of furnishing recruits for the ranks of the laity, but for the ministry as well. The chief publication of one of the great denominations noted, not long since, the large number of its leading ministers that had come from other denominations. It mentioned the names of four men in particular, of national reputation, every one of whom had been converted by the evangelistic efforts of another denomination; and commented thus: "A denomination that has not life in itself to furnish its ablest

leaders can not grow, maintain its best traditions, and foster enthusiasm to carry on its work." And it is evident from conditions obtaining, which make it difficult even for those Churches that have furnished so many for others heretofore to supply their own pulpits, that the preachers and leaders of the past have been largely born and given to the Church through the rejuvenating power of evangelism.

Conserve and Intensify Formal Agencies.

From all previous observations there is evidence that the Church has reached the point where she is anxious to diminish, rather than increase, formal organizations; aware that one great weakness of the period through which we have been passing was the attempt to organize Christian forces in some new fashion, as the result of which the Church has been nearly organized to death, dissipating the major part of her power. It has been wisely observed that "what the Church needs is not more harness, but more horse." We can not hope to increase our power unless we diminish the machinery which exhausts nearly all resources in its running. Many Churches are a veritable "hive of industry," where the people gather almost every night in the week, and yet the product of the

real thing for which the Church stands is hardly perceptible. Whatever of significance these may have in securing indirect attachment to the Church, if upon these we are to depend for the Christianizing of the world, the millennium is a long way off.

We are now beginning to realize, also, that there is dissipation, not only in organization within the Church, but often as much dissipation in multiplying religious services. These are strenuous times, in which people, both in departments of mental and physical activities, are pressed to their utmost; and the attempt to force additional services, multiplying them indefinitely, often dissipates whatever zeal people ordinarily possess. There is only one course open to the Church for successful evangelistic effort; and it is a good thing sometimes to be shut up to one course, for then there is some chance of concentrating and conserving energy. It is sincerely hoped that the repeated failure of Churches of all denominations to find any successful solution to the problem of how to gain the attention, and secure the salvation of the people, with every variety of plan, will now be persuaded to settle down to an acceptance of the original declaration, that there is no

other name, that Christ, if He is lifted up, will draw, and that the Gospel is the only power unto salvation. We believe there is a growing feeling among many preachers and Christian leaders, amid the vexations of multiplied societies and services, that we would be stronger by far if we had only the Church. How many such pastors of large and burdensome Churches have cried out in their distraction and depression, "O for a Church, only a Church, and nothing else!"—a Church with its essential services, to which, without strife and confusion, the people might give themselves, adding strength and stability to the same, and making the people of the community feel the dignity of its position by the supremacy of its mission beside all other institutions with which at present the Church often competes fruitlessly.

There are a few orders of service and modes of activity which have been so long a part of Church life, and have survived all innovations, have been almost universally adopted and equally fruitful, that it seems perfectly clear that the future success of the Church must depend upon magnifying these, and concentrating interest and energy in them. Indeed, it may be safely affirmed that had this been done in the

past, we should have accomplished infinitely more, and a better opinion of the Church would have been retained in the community. We need not emphasize, particularly, the regular Sabbath services of the Church, as such are universal, and not susceptible to any particular change; but it may be fitting to consider briefly the emphasis that may be placed upon these services with regard to the matter of evangelism. The idea of worship is supposed to be pre-eminent, and instead of detracting from this in the average non-ritualistic Church, we would add somewhat; for it is often a real weakness of these Churches that they have so magnified entertaining music and attractive preaching that the majesty of worship is largely absent, and that the devotional spirit, so religiously educational to young and old, is not in force, but displaced often by a spirit of self-gratification and sometimes of criticism; thus the service is void of reverence and our young people lose their respect for the house of God. But to the extent that Sabbath services have their direct productive features, there are some things which we may emphasize as capable of adding to the evangelistic force of the Church. The preaching of Sabbath morning should seek to instruct

in the great fundamentals of doctrine and principles of experience, character, and life; and this for those who have come into the Church, enabling Christianity to get its strongest possible hold upon them, making them feel its significance by bringing them into such attachment to its interests as to save them from that vast throng of nominal Christians who become a burden to the Church and a stumbling block to all evangelistic efforts. Its preaching at regular intervals should be such as to keep the Church alive to the work of saving the people, and, at periods of special order, to press more definitely the immediate claims of Christianity upon those attendant upon its services.

The Sunday Evening Service.

We deem extremely important the Sunday evening service; but it has received so generous treatment in a number of recent publications that we refrain from an extended discussion. Suffice it to say, that no Church will succeed in any large measure in becoming evangelistic that can not secure a Sunday evening congregation made up largely of non-Christian people; and until we can make our pastors feel that this service is most important, so much so that it can not be

dismissed through any part of the year, nor displaced by anything else, and until we can get our representative people to feel that their presence can not be spared at such a service, we can not have an evangelistic Church. For the most part of the year, at least, the preaching should be of a directly evangelistic order, and definite results aimed for; not perhaps in every service, but as the rule; whether in the immediate service or a well-ordered after meeting. We would not attach so much importance to the peculiarity of the themes, the genius of advertising, or the novelty of manipulation. We would be slow to reflect upon anything that has proven useful; but we not only hesitate to recommend methods and programs, but rather discourage emphasis upon these, confident that such are only temporary stimulants, and not the real cure. The success of the Sunday evening service for an evangelistic effect must not depend upon so unstable factors; the intense, earnest, loyal devotion of the people, the magnetism of strong, thoughtful, soulful, earnest sermons, and a simple, but profound faith in the old but unworn story, intelligently, fairly, and impassionately preached, are the

only abiding elements of a popular and effective Sunday evening service.

The Prayer-Meeting. An evangelistic Church will be an impossibility unless larger importance is attached to the midweek service. The people must be willing to lay aside their social engagements and business cares, and reserve enough energy to give force and attractiveness to the prayer-meeting. And this interest must be by people of best standing and largest influence. There has been a disposition in the average Church to permit those in lower ranks of society, a large majority of them women, to be responsible for this service, detracting from its character by the absence of candor and sturdiness so much needed. This allows an impression to obtain, also, upon the part of the world, that such services are beneath the consideration of the more important people. It is altogether too frequently the case that a majority of the officials of Churches, who to the world are its representatives, only rarely, if ever, darken the doors of the Church prayer-room. They either lack in the essence of religious life, or consider themselves too busy to give an evening to this kind of service. If representative people of the Church ignore the

prayer-meeting, the place for instruction, inspiration, and drill in spiritual and evangelistic activities, we can not expect a genuinely evangelistic Church. Some of the busiest men of largest public and commercial responsibility we have ever known, have found it possible, and indeed desirable, to pre-empt prayer-meeting night, and have given themselves side by side with those of humbler life in the performance of simple Christian service. We can have no evangelistic Church until we can induce our most intelligent and otherwise influential people to give themselves in larger measure to this work. Church officials must be chosen less with reference to ability and willingness to support the Church financially, or because of representative place in the community, but more by reason of intelligent and consistent devotion to the chief things for which the Church stands, the salvation of the people.

Standing one day at a station, waiting for a train to move, a fine-looking, well-dressed, very intelligent gentleman stepped up to me and made himself known. After some reference to Church and religious matters in general, he said, "I am a commercial traveler; I sell goods to pay expenses, but my business is

to serve Jesus Christ." Let that idea obtain in the life of the representative men of the laity at large, and what a force they would become by impressing the world with their appreciation of the importance of Christian life and work! There must be a deeper consecration to the captivating ideal of Christianity which brought one of the biggest men that God ever made to such a conception of the value of humble service that he exclaimed, "For to me to live is Christ." Our people do find time for other things outside the Church, and they can usually be persuaded to attend social functions within the church. Indeed, many of our Churches are crowded with activities, until there is almost strife and confusion through competitive societies night after night, while the weekly prayer-meeting drags on (weakly), sustained only by the faithful few.

Riding one day on one of our great inter-urban electric cars, I remarked to the conductor that he was making unusual speed. He said, "We can do this because this car has the right of way." The cars conflicting were obliged to yield the track at every point. An evangelistic Church will keep the tracks clear, and give the Gospel of salvation right of way. We must

insist upon sufficient emphasis upon the prayer-meeting, and make it as attractive as anything to which the doors of the church open from Sunday to Sunday; and make every Church member feel that it is more important than any business meeting, social function, or public service; so that from social pleasures, private desires, public life, and commercial cares, men and women will halt midway the week's busy, burdensome life, and refresh and strengthen their souls, and fill anew their life with the unselfish impulses that send them forth to seek and save the lost.

Pastors and Prayer-Meetings.

We must not attach all the responsibility for the lack of interest in, and devotion to, the prayer-meeting, to the Church members. The fact that often the people of sturdy thought and character do not frequent this service, is due in no little measure to the weak and sentimental spirit that often controls it, and failure upon the part of the pastors to conduct a service worthy of their attention. Pastors too frequently go into the prayer-meeting with no particular preparation, trusting to some spontaneous development of thought to give trend to the meeting; and it often happens that some good but sentimental

person, or some religious fanatic, will break the spell of such a service, into which no thought has been injected, by remarks which will wreck all its possibilities.

It is true that people should go to the prayer-meeting with the idea of prayer as pre-eminent; but most people coming from the busy world, some from surroundings everything but favorable to devotion, will need a brief, earnest, pungent address to put them in an attitude of genuine devotion and earnest supplication. Pastors must make themselves efficient in conducting such a service by as much care in preparation as for the work of the Sabbath. The writer has never failed to have well-attended and interesting prayer-meetings; but it has been accomplished by never going to prayer-meeting without as careful preparation as for a Sunday morning service. Thought must be given to such service, not to consider it a mere mid-week attachment. Thus we may get hold of the thinking people, and make them think after we get them; for it is one of the chief ends of the ministry to make people think. By such emphasis and such attention to the prayer-meeting, the Church may be kept alive; and by keeping upon its heart the matter of saving the

people, this service may become one of the most potent factors in continuous evangelism.

The Sunday-School. It is generally conceded that the weakest point of evangelism in recent years has been the lack of concern for the boys and girls of our Sunday-schools. It is probably fair to say that, in the average Sunday-school, from thirty to fifty per cent of the scholars from ages of eight to twenty years have been unconverted, and most of them in no way committed to the Christian life; and while we have found it impossible to get anything like such a percentage of unconverted people in our ordinary Sunday services, and have during these years conducted week after week of revival service in which we were fortunate if we secured ten per cent of unconverted people in attendance, still we have overlooked the fact that we have had every Sunday in the best possible relation to Christian expediencies this very large and important class of material which we have almost utterly neglected. We have advertised, planned, hired evangelists and singers, have made canvass after canvass to secure attendance upon evangelistic services of the outside world, who, for the most part, have ignored us and have gone their way, leaving our

meetings to be conducted in the interest only of an occasional sinner, or a few backsliders who warm over at every periodical revival, while all this time we have had before us scores of the brightest and best boys and girls and young people in the community, and we have scarcely spent a tithe in any special way in trying to get them converted to Christ.

During these years, and, indeed, ever since the radical change of thought wrought by the Wesleyan revival, the Church has been in possession of the correct theory of children and the kingdom; but has only in the most limited degree put that theory into practice. Several things have hindered the Church in this respect; as has been well said, soon after the coming of the revival heretofore mentioned, "Dramatic conversions became the goal of the Church," and the same evidences of conversion were demanded of children as of adults; then later the modern evangelistic method, with its vast routine and defined accompaniments, was introduced,—all of which is unadaptable to the simplicity of childhood and youth; and above all was the lack of concern which obtained, manifesting the gross inconsistency that demanded distinct and unmistakable evidences of conver-

sion in children as in adults, and yet hardly to any extent sought their conversion. As the result of this line of education for so many years, we find it extremely difficult to bring ourselves to feel that a twelve or fifteen-year-old boy or girl is to be taken up as a proposition as serious and important as a man or woman of forty or fifty.

The average pastor will find himself greatly concerned about the slightest indication of interest in religious matters upon the part of a non-church goer, will take such a case in hand, and stay by it for weeks with great devotion; while he would be comparatively indifferent to any such interest manifested upon the part of a bright boy or girl in the Sunday-school. We have not been helped much by the mechanical plan in common use by evangelists, for it is not suited to children; pastors have sometimes turned their boys and girls over to such, and have permitted an evangelist to play upon their emotions, or bring them into captivity to his machinery; because this has had no depth of meaning to them, it has not been abiding; and thus evangelistic work among them has been discredited. These young folks are simple in their nature, and need simple methods; and it

is a grave mistake to use other means; a mistake that may result in an evil that years can not correct. Almost anybody with a strong appeal to emotions or a well-manipulated service, can secure the consent of the average boy or girl; but these young people should be committed to the Christian life with greatest care; while we make the way simple and plain, and as easy of access as possible, in turn it should be made sufficiently hard to have some meaning, and the cross should not be eliminated; if it is, it will be discovered later, and will become a stumbling block. In the conduct of such a service the leader should insist *one* by *one* that these persons understand fully the significance of the step taken. Then, too much must not be expected by way of radical change. They will not prove less consistent than adults, though their inconsistency may manifest itself in other ways. They should not be discounted as they often are.

A pastor may deem it wise to make mental discount, but they should never suspect it. Boys and girls do not like to be discounted, and it is a mistake frequently made to say in public or in reports, fifty conversions, and be-

sides a large number of boys and girls. If the pastor stays by these as he would by some prominent but notorious character endeavoring to reform, he will save most of them. When such a person expresses a purpose to lead a better life, the whole Church gets on its broad cloak of charity, and every man considers himself a special committee to look after this one, a fitting thing to do; but is this man whose life is largely wasted worth more than a bright boy of fifteen years? The Church must learn to stop the leakage; while we are endeavoring to save a few persons, many of whom have little service in them for Christ and the Church, we are letting splendid boys and girls slip up in their teens and out into the world, to become in a few years what these are, that we find so hard to get even inside the Church. In a genuinely evangelistic Church every Sunday-school teacher will feel that his or her duty is something more than that of entertainment or instruction in great moral and spiritual truths; that the position demands that the teacher shall not only have the attention of the scholars and attach them to herself and the school, but that the supreme end to be reached is the committal

of these boys and girls to a definite purpose to lead a Christian life, and that all teaching that falls short of that is unsatisfactory.

Young People's Societies. The young people's societies are not of so long standing in the Church as to be considered absolutely indispensable, or to make it possible, from the past, to prophesy of the future; yet these have been with us long enough and have become sufficiently universal to be given consideration as one of the important agencies of Christian activity. We feel confident that their future depends upon their vital relation to the subject now before us. How shall we hold our young people to the Church until they are converted, and how shall we be able to commit to an earnest Christian life those who are within the Church? are perplexing questions that concern every earnest pastor. We need to define what we mean by holding them to the Church. Is it simply to get them in good associations and under favorable influences? Indeed, no one will discount this; but have we not weakened our position as Churches with them, by making them feel that this is sufficient? We get them into an organization, and often the organization begets more problems than it solves. We

attempt to please and gratify them, and at the same time keep them from compromising the Church by what they do in its name, largely because the society does not stand for the same thing that the Church stands for, or else the Church itself has lost sight of its real mission. It is not enough to hold these young people merely on the social fringes of the Church; they must become evangelized, and be made evangelists, if the Church of to-morrow is to have the spirit and power necessary with which to fulfill its ever-increasing mission of evangelizing the world. These young people, bubbling over with energy which may be easily dissipated to fruitless ends, must be so controlled and directed that this vast power may be conserved; and if the Church can be dominated by an all-controlling spirit of evangelism, these young people will not be a problem, but one of the mightiest factors which the Church possesses. Their meetings will not be longer tame and monotonous, but inspiring and forceful, if under the direction of a definite evangelistic aim and spirit. They make the best possible workers with their unconventional and natural ways; what they do is attractive, because spontaneous and hearty; their enthusiastic songs,

direct prayers, and simple testimonies contribute sympathy, impressiveness, and warmth to the service; and as helpers of pastors they surpass, because of their willingness to be led and even directed what to do.

When we observe how rapidly the young people of our homes, Sunday-schools, and congregations drift away from the Church as soon as they get out into the world, and how comparatively small a number of boys and girls the Church tides over from the Sunday-school into the young people's societies, and then into Church membership, this question is not only urgent but alarming. We seem to be committed to a prevailing notion that, during this period, young people can not be reached with the Gospel, because they are not in an attitude of sufficient seriousness to be strongly appealed to by religious matters. Admitting that this is in part true, yet a moment's reflection will bring the conviction that, with all the difficulties which beset us in gaining the interest of these, because life has not yet been touched sufficiently by its somber features to make it to them serious, these difficulties nevertheless are not to be compared with those that we encounter when we attempt to reach men and women who

have sealed their lives in indifference or stubbornness, or have buried them in depths of worldliness. One of the things that makes the Church weak with the young people is, that it often attempts to capture them through a soft, sentimental piety, or a morose and other-world religiousness. They are not attracted by that kind of representation of Christianity; and they will not be frightened, in any large measure, into these things, because they feel that this is cowardly and lacking in the right motive. They do believe in Christianity, and that almost without exception; they are simply waiting to see a representation of it in downright, intelligent earnestness, that makes them feel the Christian life is worth while. They are filled with energy, ambition, and hopefulness, and a religious life that takes hold of men and possesses them, will appeal to them and cause them to stop, think, and change their course.

Evangelism Thus Becomes Constructive and Progressive.

Many pastors have been quite as much perplexed with the question, "After the revival, what?" as with the question, "How shall we secure a revival?" Not enough consideration has been given in the past to the fact that a revival is "a remedy for a condition of things that should

never have existed." The very term presupposes the loss of normal life and the necessity of restoring it. Much of the weakness of evangelism has been due to too much emphasis upon the temporary remedy, rather than the constructive character of genuine Christianization. "The making over of men can never be equal to the making of men," needs to be applied to adults as well as children; for a large measure of the ineffectiveness of revivals has been due to the lack of preparation, and careful training after. The Church that aims at continuous evangelism through its regular services and by normal activities is sure to acquire larger possibilities in this respect, and produce a better type of Christians because of the manner in which they are led up to the point of decision by earnest reflection and thoughtful consideration of the cost. The surroundings and impulses continuously prevailing are such as to establish character; avoiding the reaction, making the Church progressive, causing men to grow in grace, depending less upon the satisfaction of a past experience, and more upon the constant birth from above. Thus the question, "After the revival, what?" is chiefly solved, because in an evangelistic

Church the normal conditions, both before and after conversion, are such as emphasize quite as much the constructive as the remedial process of regeneration.

Continuous Evangelism Qualified.

In contending for an evangelistic Church we must not put too much emphasis upon continuous evangelism, unless we carefully define that phrase. An evangelistic Church of the character for which we plead, and which we believe must be final, is not a Church where conversions must occur in every service, but rather where they may occur, and will, in most services. We need to guard against the danger of measures that will produce another movement of mechanical evangelism. We must give less attention to book-keeping and the disposition to count people who are converted, and credit ourselves with the achievement. There will be no ultimate evangelism until the ministry swings away from the selfish standard of merely keeping up or increasing the Church membership. Continuous evangelism should be emphasized with the idea of having the Church in such condition, and the preaching of such an order, that whenever, in his judgment, the pastor deems it prudent to open the door for public decision for Christ,

the very atmosphere will contribute to the salvation of men; in other words, the Church is not to be a factory where things are mechanically produced, but rather an incubator where out of prevailing conditions there bursts the new life. The Church that may be most properly characterized as evangelistic has about it no evidence of unusual effort or special method. It is a Church where work is done and services are conducted as though these conditions were ordinary and normal; yet a Church, every service of which is characterized by a simple but intense earnestness in what is said and done upon the part of preacher and people, that makes everybody feel who comes within the doors that Christianity means something. Out of such conditions souls will be born, not as by mechanism, but as by magic.

Practical Consecration the Cost.

We recently listened to an extended and very interesting discussion in a conference on evangelism, where preachers were exhorting laymen, and laymen were exhorting preachers, and every man who spoke had a well-defined conviction of the weakness of the Church on the one hand, the secret of success on the other; but not one of

these laymen or preachers offered to exhibit the product of his ideas.

We passed out of that meeting in company with an intelligent, earnest, active, practical layman, who, shrugging his shoulders, said, "Why don't they do it?" This is an age for doing things. Men may talk, discuss, theorize, but philosophy that is workable is the only kind that grips the world of to-day. We can not have an evangelistic Church unless we are willing to pay the cost. Consecration that will make possible such a condition is not a mere altar consecration; such a consecration is fitting and expedient, but the altar must be something more than a place where we promise God what we will do. The altar must signify more as a principle than as a place. It is useless to bring the Church to the altar for consecration, then send it forth again to pursue the same life; misleading it to believe in the virtue of what was done there, rather than in the virtue of what must be done as it goes forth to a life of service. We have had a large amount of altar consecrations, but nothing to correspond with it in the life of the Church. Let men come to the altar as a result of a fixed purpose, and thus

make more sacred this purpose by a public vow; but we should not compel the people to this act of consecration as though it were possessed of peculiar potency. It is easier to exercise faith in a supernatural religion with which to achieve the miracle of saving the world, than to pay the actual cost of the world's redemption.

God has been giving us such agencies as the apostles did not have, and as no other age possessed; and He expects the miracles of to-day to be in the manifestation of unselfish devotion of the splendid gifts of power that He has put into our hands. Christ could afford to feed a hungry multitude by multiplying loaves and fishes when there were no more; but Christ can not afford to feed any hungry multitude thus, when His consecrated disciples who profess to have left all to follow Him have plenty with which to feed them. What do subtle, mysterious miracles amount to in the absence of that most marvelous product of Christianity, an unselfish life? When by what we do, how we live, and by the intense earnestness of our service, we convince men that Christianity is everything to us, it will send a spiritual shock through this old world greater in effect than any Pentecost, old or new. Because of the

small fraction of time and energy now devoted by the average Christian to the cause of Jesus Christ, we do not convince the world that we feel we must be about our Father's business, and that this to us is the first consideration. It is easier to talk piously, to believe unqualifiedly, to sing and pray with zest, than actually to "do something."

Suppose our people whose lives are surrounded by intense influences, living strenuously—professional men, business men, working men, society women, and mothers—were to turn one-tenth of their time, thought, and energy into the channels of Christian service, not set apart in so many exact hours or mites, but as the spontaneous expression of a principle great enough to have become a passion,—then shall we have a revival that will set the Church on fire with zeal for service, and kindle the Christian world with a new passion for souls.

The ultimate evangelism will not be expressed in great local upheavals and periodical religious revolutions, but in straightforward devotion to the Church of Christ when possessed of the spirit of evangelism, with inherent ability to replenish its life apart from special seasons of refreshing, and power enough to

impart the leaven of redemption to the sinful world day by day. Let such a Church as this obtain, and the kingdoms of this world will melt away, and we shall begin to pray with a new faith and hope, "Thy kingdom come."

CHAPTER VI.

THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD.

1. World Evangelization Involves Evangelism.
2. The Gospel for the World must be Evangelistic.
3. The Evangelistic Church an Evangelizing Church.
4. The Demand of the Hour.

Conclusion.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD.

The Church no longer assumes the position that "God will convert the heathen when He gets ready," but accepts the responsibility that the heathen will be converted when the Church gets ready. For more than a century has the Protestant Church turned its ear toward the East, the West, the North, the South, to catch the Macedonian cry from benighted islands, from great continents with their misty deserts, and from behind towering walls of pagan civilizations; and through this time a few heroic souls have set sail for these barbarous islands, have blazed a pathway through the deserts and jungles, and have risked their lives in attempts to pry through the mighty walls of paganism. Now the islands are near at hand, the path through the desert has been thrown open to a veritable highway, and the walls of the nations have crumbled, while the steamboat,

railway, telegraph, and telephone have brought the world into one great assembly-room, and they who will, may find their way down the vast aisles to remotest humanity yet untouched by the Gospel of Christ.

World Evangelization Involves Evangelism.

Some nations and peoples in history have been captured, subdued, and brought nominally in subjection to Christian standards as represented either by State or Church; but no nation in history has ever thus been evangelized. We have before us at the present time a vivid illustration in a great populous nation, for ages under Church and State control in the name of Christianity, but the people are far away in actual life from the real things for which Christianity stands; and, instead of being elevated, are more degenerate than the nations that only yesterday emerged from heathen darkness.

The Gospel for the World Must Be Evangelistic.

Those Churches that represent only the ideal and ethical features of Christianity, and endeavor to lift humanity by securing the acceptance of its doctrines and philosophy of life, and committing men to its standards of purity, righteousness, and benevolence, have never yet succeeded as missioners to the lost sons of men. Such

Churches may help to elevate and idealize the life of a very limited class of people, but they lack that pungency of teaching and the leverage necessary to uplift the enslaved masses of heathen and pagan races. This, we think, needs no particular statement of defense. A casual observer easily notes the helplessness of all unevangelical and also non-evangelistic Churches, in grappling with the problem of the redemption of the heathen. The Church that has a creed, long or short, that does not plant the cross squarely down in the center of it, emphasizing its atoning and redeeming power, can do little in regenerating this old world. The preaching of the Gospel that does not make preeminent the picture of "Him who was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," and burn into the very consciences of men the significance of pierced hands and feet and thorn-crowned brow, will never lift this world to the level of the kingdom of God; because it does not give to men that faith, hope, and courage that is born of a positive assurance of Divine favor. Others may infatuate men with dreams of the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount, which makes every man feel that he has come face to face with the loftiest ideal

that ever entranced human vision; but by a crossless Church and a crossless Gospel the enslaved world of humanity will never be able to realize to itself this dream, and the kingdoms of this world will never become the kingdom of our Christ. Until men have gone by the way of the Hill of Calvary, they can never reach the Mount of Beatitudes. Between the mount of idealism portraying the glory of the kingdom of God and the lowly level upon which humanity stands, eagerly looking toward some hoped-for Canaan, must be placed midway the mighty leverage of the redemptive power of the cross of Christ.

Evangelistic Church an Evangelizing Church.

The Church needs the cross, not only for atonement, but the spirit of the cross for the self-denying enterprises of the kingdom. Only as the Church is committed to the life of "mending what others have broken," of building up what others have torn down, of living to right the wrongs she did not cause, exalting those she did not abase, and saving the people for whose condition she has not been responsible, and in whose redemption there may come no personal gain; only as the Church looks upon, and goes to the heathen world, as its Master came

to the whole world, to die for men while they were yet sinners, can she fulfill the mission of world evangelization. We must be able to convince, and force upon the very conscience of the Church the real working principle of Christianity. This is not difficult because of lack of evidence, but because the cross is still hard to bear. We readily accept the blessed fact that He died, the Just for the unjust; that "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We all believe that the cross is the lever by which alone this old world, throbbing with new life, swings back toward the throne of God. In theory the Christian Church accepts the principle that the leaven must be lost in the lump, if the lump is to be leavened; that except a man lose his life, he shall not find it; we all with one consent accept the doctrine of the cross, but with almost equal unanimity do we falter before the life of the cross; and it is not because we shall be beheaded, burned at stakes, tortured in dungeons, "despised and rejected of men," but because of a meaning deeper and more opposed to our poor, sluggish, sleeping natures, and to our world ambitions, aspirations, and indulgences; because we are not willing to give our

lives away, not willing to step into the breach that sin has made, to "mend what others have broken." Evangelistic Christianity demands not only a cross for atonement, but demands the spirit of the cross in turn re-enacted in the life of the Church, making the Church more anxious to save the world than to be happy and self-satisfied.

We are sure that no thoughtful person who has become at all familiar with the tremendous movements of the Christian religion and its triumphs under difficulty, can fail to be confident that, nominally, Christianity's triumph is perfectly secure. The danger of to-day is not so much in the complex problems of the social, civic, and commercial life at home, nor in the almost incomprehensible problem of the millions surrounded by densest darkness, and the barriers that again and again rise and retard the work of God in heathen lands. It is not strange that, when brought seriously face to face with these problems, we wonder if Christianity, cradled in a manger, coming out of Nazareth, embodied in simple principles, authorized by an unassuming personality, can ever be equal to these. Concerning this, our fears need never rise. The name and principles

of Jesus are forever secure; He can have no successor, for He has no rival. But this will not evangelize the world, nor even save the Church from peril; it did not in the fourth century, it will not in the twentieth. We may be warranted in fearing that nominal Christianity, borne everywhere so jubilantly on the wings of a universal sentiment, will not have in it nor behind it enough of the spirit and power of Jesus of Nazareth to save the world or the Church. We can not convert the world unless, where our money goes, our intelligent devotion goes also; nor can we, by merely supporting the Church, save the community. We may talk, agitate, and plan with all modern schemes of Christendom to the end of another century, and yet arrive at little. We must learn that Christianity alone can save men, and that Christianity is something more than a great system in which to have confidence; it is a saving power through human agency, only as it becomes a living virtue which never can be realized except in a personal life of service. We have been singing extensively in the past the military songs of Christianity, and they have inspired that peculiar heroism necessary for trials and martyrdom, and "Onward, Chris-

tian soldiers," is still a splendid song to be sung on great occasions of massed representative Christians; but the spirit of song needed for to-day is, "O, give us hearts to love like Thine," or—

> "Lord, lead us to the mountain's height,
> To prayer's transfiguring glow,
> And clothe us with the Spirit's might
> For nobler work below."

The Demand of the Hour. We need a new hymn-writer who will take the spirit of the Master, and apply it to the life of to-day, inspiring men, not so much to march for Christ, as to live for Christ. We may not hope for the time speedily to come when the Church will be universally and absolutely Christian; but if, in this great day of responsibility and opportunity, we could reverse the majority so that even sixty per cent of our people were prayer-meeting Christians, self-sacrificing Christians, more loyal to the Church than to the club, more devoted to Christ than to business, more stock invested in the kingdom of God than in the passing empires of the world, more ready to spend time looking over God's great unredeemed world and planning for its

salvation than over the uncertain fields of worldly ambition and eagerly anticipating the harvest in stocks and bonds, silver, and gold,—then would the question of the kingdom's coming be early settled. The demand of the wide, wide world of to-day is not to be shown what He has done for us, but what He inspires us to do for others. The only hope of the world's evangelization is, that the Church of Jesus Christ shall become thoroughly aware of human need, and impassioned with the ideal of Christian service that comes only in its intensity and sustaining force through the blessed experience of companionship with the Christ in seeking to save the lost.

Conclusion.

There is no Christianity that is not Christ-likeness, and the only measurement of Christian life and service is by correspondence to His. So much of responsibility and of possibility is involved in this great problem that Christ has put upon the hearts of His followers, that one who enters upon the task must feel keenly his insufficiency and cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" and long to be possessed as much as possible of the life and spirit of his Master. Let all such pray: Blessed Master, point us back to

Thy manger cradle; let us look into Thy humble home, and gaze upon Thy hands of hardy toil. Permit us to stand side by side with Thee in the wilderness, faced by the subtle tempter with his taunting offers. May we comprehend something of the depth of Thy self-sacrificing sympathy in the sorrowing Bethany home! Lift for us a moment the sacred veil, that we may take Thy measurement of pain in Gethsemane's cruel garden. Give us courage to dare to face with Thee the judgment hall. Strengthen us once again until we are able to follow Thee as Thou dost bear Thy cross up Calvary's hill; and before our heart has failed us give us one splendid vision of the cross itself, where, when we were sinners, Thou didst die for us; then point us past to the company of faithful ones, who, to fulfill Thy commission of discipling the nations, often lay in darkened dungeons, were lashed with many stripes, tossed on stormy seas, died in prison pens, or withered in fiery flames; and from this vision call us out to follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest, answering the prayer of all the centuries by our works as by our faith, as we bear in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus. Then Christianity will have had its supreme apolo-

getic in the reappearance of the Christ among men, miraculously incarnated in those who follow Him. Then every dark and saddened life, every poor and depraved nature, will be touched by a secret power of redemption, and speedily the long-wasted deserts of the earth will blossom as the rose, and the kingdom of God will be near at hand.

William Carey Int'l University
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